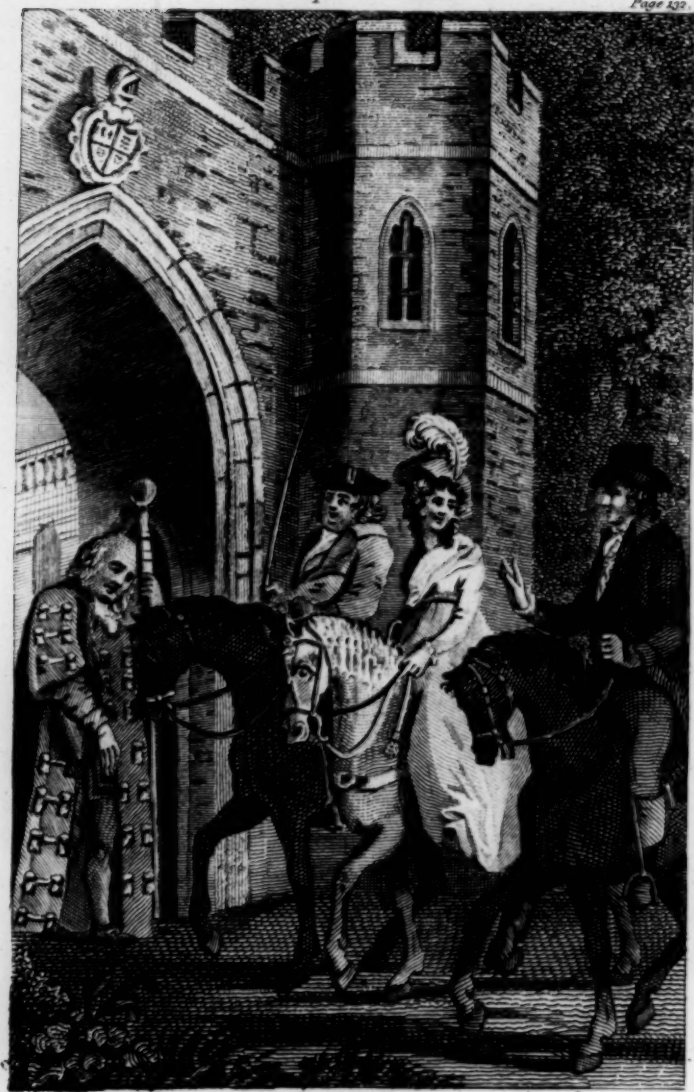
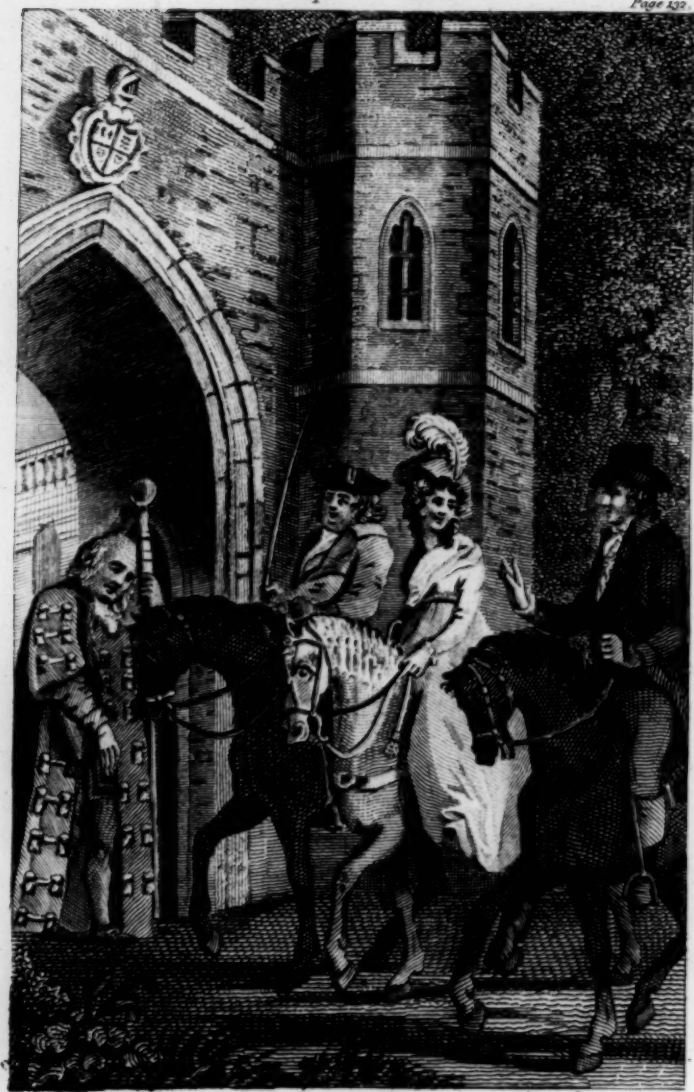




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Sparrow-John



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Sparrow-John

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H E N R Y;

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF ARUNDEL.

V O L. II.

THE THIRD EDITION.

Ficta voluptatis causâ sint proxima veris,
Nec quodcunque volet poscat sibi fabula credi.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR CHARLES DILLY.

M,DCC,XCVIII.



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HENRY.

HENRY.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

CHAPTER I.

The Author appeals to his Readers.

I SHALL now put in a few words, whilst my history pauses, touching what I claim from my readers, as a right, and what I hope and expect from them, as a favour.

My claim is briefly this, credit in all cases for an honest meaning, or in other words, the best sense that a doubtful passage will bear: it is thus I have treated others, the same treatment I have a right now to claim from them.

On the score of favour I am their suitor in the humblest sense, for I see so many imperfections starting up in my performance, which I cannot cure, and suspect there may be so many more, which possibly I shall not discover, that I have no notion of sending my sins into the world without one apology; I am not hardy enough to give in the account between my readers and myself, without the usual salvo of er-

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rors excepted.—"Take nature for your guide," says the critic; "follow her and you can't go wrong." True, most sagacious critic, I reply; but what is so difficult? Does the tragic poet always find her out? Does the comic writer never miss her haunts? Yet they profess to paint from nature, and no doubt they do their best: the outline may be true, but the least slip in filling it up mars the portrait; it demands a steady hand, a faithful eye, a watchful judgment, to make the likeness perfect; and grant it perfect, the author's work will gain no praise, unless it be pleasing also; for who opens a novel but in the expectation of being amused by it?

"Let it be merry," says one, "for I love to laugh."—"Let it be pathetic," says a second, "for I have no objection to the melancholy tale that makes me weep."—"Let your characters be strongly marked," cries a third, "your fable well imagined, and work it up with a variety of new and striking incidents, for I like to have my attention kept alive."—These and a hundred more are the demands, which one poor brain is to satisfy in a work of fancy; wit, humour, character, invention, genius, are to be set to work together, fiction is to be combined with probability

bability, novelty with nature, ridicule with good-humour, passion with morality, and pain with pleasure; every thing is to be natural, yet nothing common; animating, but not inflammatory; interesting, but not incredible; in short, there must be every thing that judgment can plan and genius execute, to make the composition perfect: no man has done all this, and he, who has done most towards it, has still fallen very short of the whole.

With all this consciousness about me, I yet do not despair but that the candid reader will find something in this fable to overbalance its miscarriages. I shall proceed as one, who knows his danger, but is not discouraged from his duty. These children of my fancy, whom I have brought into existence, I shall treat as they deserve, dealing out their portions of honour and dishonour as their conduct seems to call for it; and though some amongst them will probably persist in acting an evil part to the last, yet collectively they will leave no evil lesson behind them.

As to our hero, if he has been so fortunate as to gain an interest in the good opinion of the reader in this period of his history, I am bold to hope he will not forfeit it in the suc-

ceeding occurrences of his life, but that he shall preserve a consistent character to the end; that so, when his part is finished, be it happy or unhappy, he may earn a plaudit as the curtain drops.

I do not aim to draw a perfect character, for after a pretty long acquaintance with mankind I have never met with any one example of the sort: how then shall I describe what I have not seen? On the contrary, if I wish to form a character, like this of Henry, in which virtue predominates, or like that of Blachford, where the opposite qualities prevail, I have nature before me in both cases: but if in the former instance I will not suffer a single shade to fall upon my canvas, and in the latter do not let one tint of light appear, what do I present to the spectator, but a confused and shapeless mass, here too glaring, and there too opaque, to preserve any outline that can give to view the form and fashion of a man?—The brightest side of human nature is not without a spot, the darkest side is not without a spark.

For my own part, as I am not apt to be amused with stories told to the discredit of mankind, I should be sorry if this of mine appeared to any of my readers to have that tendency

tendency in the general. A contrast of character there will be in all histories, true or feign'd ; but when an author is the biographer of men and women of his own making, he has it in his power, without losing sight of nature, to let the prevailing impression of his fable be favourable or unfavourable, and indulge his own propensities to a certain degree, which ever way they point. Now I know not why we should studiously put forward none but the worst features of the time we live in ; yet I think this has been done by some novelists of great celebrity, in whom there reigns a spirit of satire, that in my opinion neither adds to their merit nor our amusement. A pedant, who secludes himself from society, may nourish a cynical humour ; but a writer, who gives the living manners of the age, is supposed to live amongst men, and write from the crowd rather than the closet ; now if such a man runs about from place to place with no cleaner purpose than to search for filth and ordure, I conceive his office to be that of a scavenger rather than a scholar. An honest man, as I take it, will always find honesty enough, and a friendly man meet friendship enough in his contemporaries, to keep him in

good-humour with them. Something indeed may be found to reprehend in all times ; as the manners and the morals fluctuate, the mirror that reflects them faithfully will give to objects as they pass their proper form and feature. In the time I am now writing, the national character shews itself in so bright a point of view, that the author must be harsh in the extreme, who holds up fictions of depravity as exemplars of the æra in which he lives.

I think I may promise myself, therefore, that the general spirit of my history will not be thought morose. I have, indeed, taken occasion, in the character of Jemima Cawdle, to make free with enthusiasm ; but I have at the same time exhibited it in contact with a virtuous principle, under the auspices of my worthy friend Ezekiel Daw : I have described a domestic tyrant in the person of Lord Crowbery ; but I did not give him a title because I thought that pride was attached to a peerage, or that the cruel and overbearing part which my fable assigns to him, was characteristic of nobility, the very contrary of which I hold for doctrine ; neither did I locate Blachford in Jamaica, as favouring an invective against our countrymen in the West Indies ; no man, I believe,

believe, can be found less inclined to be a convert to that groundless prejudice, which vain and shallow heads have been hatching for purposes no less fatal to the interests of the public than to the reputations of individuals.

To represent scenes of familiar life in an elegant and interesting manner, is one of the most difficult tasks an author can take in hand; for of these every man is a critic: Nature is in the first place to be attended to, and probability is not to be lost sight of; but it must be nature strongly featured, and probability closely bordering on the marvellous; the one must touch upon extravagance, and the other be highly seasoned with adventures—for who will thank us for a dull and lifeless journal of insipid facts? Now every peculiarity of humour in the human character is a strain upon nature, and every surprizing incident is a degree of violence to probability: How far shall we go then for our reader's amusement, how soon shall we stop in consideration of ourselves? There is undoubtedly a land-mark in the fields of fancy, *sunt certi denique fines*, but it requires a nice discernment to find them out, and a cautious temper not to step beyond them.

Here, then, I will rest my cause, and conclude my chapter. My readers have my best endeavours to amuse them; I have devoted very many hours to the composition of these volumes, and I am beholden to them for beguiling me of many a care; if they retain their property when they shall pass into the hands of those who peruse them, it will be every thing I can hope for from them.

CHAPTER II.

Chamber Dialogues of different Sorts.

WHEN our hero arrived at Zachary's castle, he found a post-chaise in waiting at the gate: As he passed it to enter the court, he made a profound reverence to a lady, whom at first sight he supposed to be his noble benefactress and the owner of it. Upon the glass being let down to return his civility, he perceived his mistake: It was Isabella Manstock: She had accompanied her cousin in her morning airing, and was now filling up the time with a book, whilst her ladyship was in private conference with Doctor Cawdle. That lady had imparted so much of her business to Miss
Manstock

Manstock as sufficed to inform her she was upon a very interesting discovery as to the identity of a young man who had belonged to her deceased friend Ratcliffe, and whom she expected to meet that morning at the Doctor's. Of Henry's adventure with the Miller, and what had passed in consequence of it, that young lady was fully apprised; the story had been told to Sir Roger in her hearing over night, and more circumstantially detailed by Lady Crowbery as she came with her in the chaise. When she saw, therefore, a young man in mourning, whose appearance answered to the description she had had of him, she was in no doubt of his being the person in question: Curiosity led her to survey him with some attention; and when she perceived him, after stopping for some little time at the gate, turn back without entering it, (for the sight of Lady Crowbery's equipage made him doubt of the propriety of his visit) she took courage to accost him, saying—"If your name is Henry, Sir, I believe you are expected within doors."—"That is my name, Madam," he replied very respectfully; "and I am much beholden to you;" upon this he turned back, and entered through the shop to the offices.

In the kitchen he was encountered by old Bridget, who, after staring at him for some time with astonishment, no sooner recognized his person, thus newly habited, than she began a string of questions, huddled together with so little order, and so much eagerness, that he fairly excused himself the trouble of replying to any one of them, by desiring she would let her master know that he attended his pleasure. —“ Hold there !” cried Bridget, “ master is engag’d.” —“ I know how he is engag’d,” replied Henry, “ but I fancy he will see me.” —“ Say you so ?” quoth the hag, “ then ’tis clear from what quarter your fortune comes : Ifackins ! you’re a rare one ! Some folks have the luck of it, that’s for certain : times are well changed with you, youngster, since you first entered these doors ; no wonder you was in such haste to leave us ; fine cloaths and an easy service suit you better than hard work and a coarse jacket !” —She then ran on with more of the like trash, with several sly glances at Lady Crowbery, till Henry again reminded her of going up to her master —“ Well, well !” replied she, “ have a little patience, my fine spark, and recollect it is not yet my place to go on
your

your errands at the word of command: though my lady has thought fit to dress you out like a gentleman, she has not hired me to be your messenger: However, I shall tell my master you are here. Sit down upon that bench; time was when you would have thank'd me for the offer: when you are call'd for I'll let you know."

Thus muttering to herself, she mounted the stairs; but instead of going into Zachary's room, went strait to her mistress, eager to broach the news she was charged with, and well prepared to set it off with every proper comment and illustration, suited to her own envious temper and the hearer's taste.

"Here's news to tell the King!" cried the hag, as she hobbled into Jemima's chamber: "As sure as you are in that place alive, Mistress, wou'd you think it? there's Harry, our errand-boy, now in the house, spruc'd out as fine as any lord in the land. If he was heir to the greatest squire in the county he cou'dn't be in handsomer mourning; spick and span new from top to toe, and all of the best!"—"What do you tell me?" exclaimed Jemima, "how has all this happen'd?"—"How has it happen'd!" repeated

Bridget ; “ why, as it always happens to such vapouring Jacks, by a smooth tongue and a handsome face ; the poor and homely may go starve for some folks ; young and personable beggars pick up all the charity : marry commend me to such charity, it may well be said to cover the multitude of sins ! As if it cou’d be a question, how he came by his clothes, when there is a certain great lady close closetted with master, who is waiting to see him in all his glory, and I warrant you upon thorns till I tell her he is come ; but I won’t tell her, not I, at least till I have your orders for it I won’t : for why ? I am no servant of her’s, I’m no putter-together of people that don’t pay me for it : why should I skip of his errands ? I wish to my heart, mistress, you cou’d only see with your own eyes how the lad is chang’d since he slipp’d his skin : Then he carries him in such a way ; he is as vain as a peacock : I protest to you I did not know him when he stept into the kitchen : Sir, said I, with a curtesy, what is your pleasure ? for I thought he was some fine gentleman that might have custom for my master.—Bridget ! cries he, go up to your master, and tell him I am here.—Marry come up ! my
dirty

dirty companion, quoth I, (for his tongue betrayed him, and by this time I had spied him out) who'll be the fool then? My master's employ'd with your betters. Let him be employ'd with whom he will, quoth he, I shall be welcome, so tell him what I bid you. With that I thought of the old proverb, "*Set a beggar on horseback,*" and will'd him to reflect on what he was before he presum'd to send me on his messages: Yet I was minded to tell you what was going on, so I came nevertheless; and now, if you please, I will go back and let him know I'm not the person he takes me for, to fetch and carry at his command; for my part, I am out of all patience with such upstarts."

"Hold, Bridget," replied Jemima, "upon reflection I think it best you should let him come up; for 'tis clear to me from what point this wind blows; and though I don't approve of my house being made a house of assignation, yet by indulging them in this one meeting we may get to the bottom of the plot, if we can but contrive to overhear their cabal. So this is your fine charitable Lady Crowbery, whom every body is praising for her good works! rare works, o'my conscience! excellent charity!

charity ! that singles out the handsomest young fellow in the world for its object, and then thinks to throw dust in our eyes by pretending to befriend him out of pure pity and good will ! Ah Bridget, Bridget ! what a world is this we live in ! How often have I preached to you upon the vanity of works ! Let us have faith and grace, and it matters little what we do, or what we omit to do. For my part, I always suspect your charitable people ; and as for her ladyship here at hand, 'tis pretty clear what complexion her charity is of : however, let her have her way for this turn, let her have her swing of charity, and enjoy the fruits of her good works ; but be sure to put your ear to the key-hole, and discover if you can what is going on, for all means are fair to bring to light the dark deeds of the wicked."

Whilst this was passing with Jemima and her maid, Lady Crowbery and the Doctor had been in close and earnest consultation on the subject of the discovery now so fully ascertained. When she had given way to those tender emotions, which Nature exacts from the sensibility of a parent under circumstances so critical, she rose from her chair, and having taken two or three turns across the room, as if for recollection's

recollection's sake and to compose her spirits, resumed her seat, and laying her hand upon the Doctor's arm, as he rested it on the elbow of his chair: "My good friend," she cried, "what shall I do in this perplexity? Dare I commit myself at once to the discretion of this young man, and trust him with the secret of his birth? Alas! I dare not make the discovery to him: the terror I should suffer, lest the secret should escape him and reach my lord, would be insupportable; you know his temper too well not to see how compleatly ruined I should be in such an event: indeed I cannot even guess at the consequences; only this I am assured of, they would be most dreadful."

"Truly," replied Zachary, "I cannot advise your ladyship to such a step at present, although I think very highly of the young person's discretion, and can well believe how much you must wish to give a loose to those feelings so natural to a parent for an only child, and one so well-deserving of your love; but the suddenness of the discovery, and the agitations of a youthful spirit, taken by surprise in a matter of such consequence, might overpower his prudence for the moment, and drive

drive him upon a discovery of the secret without any intention of betraying it."

" 'Tis exactly that which I stand in dread of," replied the lady; "you state the case correctly as I feel it, and those feelings, which I have never ventured to confide to any body but yourself, would be so hard to suppress, were the object of them here present, that I am almost afraid of indulging myself with an interview. Yet again, when I consider how long I have been in the practice of suppressing what I feel, I think I may risque the meeting. He is not entirely new to my sight, and if my spirits should be too much agitated by what passes, you will take measures for bringing me to my recollection, and preventing consequences that may be dangerous to us both; this you can pass off to the score of indisposition, and dismiss him when you see occasion: but if I can command myself so far as to enter into conversation with him naturally, and without hazarding too much, you will leave me to make my own way with him in such a manner, as may enable me to gain some insight into his character and understanding. As for his person, I told you how striking the impression was that it made upon me, not
only

only from its absolute but relative beauty, as bringing to my memory the very image of a father, who was, in my eyes at least, the model of perfection. Alas! the traces of that fatally-beloved form are too deeply imprinted on my heart ever to be effaced by time; and if it was a crime to love, and be undone by loving him too well, surely my sufferings have been such as fully to atone for my improvident offence. To purchase pardon of a father, I consented to his wishes by marrying Lord Crowbery: How dreadful was that sacrifice! I had no heart to bestow; that was gone with him, from whom I was separated as far as sea and land and obstacles insurmountable could divide us from each other, without a hope of ever meeting more on this side death. What has been his fate Heaven only knows! mine has been sorrowful enough, and what to other married women would be an irksome reflection, is to me my only consolation—I have never borne children to Lord Crowbery. At the same time, I am sensible how much this circumstance contributes to embitter our domestic peace, and aggravate that ill-humour, which my unwearied efforts cannot soothe. Alas! how should they? He is quick enough to discern that the attentions I pay him, and
the

the patience I exert, have no connection with the heart; that they are artificial virtues, become familiar by practice; and that I am indebted to indifference only for the facility with which I perform them. If then I am thus exposed to his ill-humour for acting the part of a dutiful and obedient wife without the affections of one, what would be my fate should he discover me to have imposed upon him in a matter more derogatory to his honour, and for which no plea or extenuation could avail me? I tremble at the reflection: wonder not, therefore, if my terrors prevail over the longings of a mother's heart, and compel me to use the language of caution, whilst my bosom glows with all the ardour of affection."

Whilst Lady Crowbery was thus discoursing, Henry had arrived, and being now announced by Bridget, order was given for his immediate admission.

CHAPTER III.

Nature will have her Way.

HENRY now entered the room, dressed, as we have before observed, in mourning for his departed friend, and with all that modest

deft grace, which was natural to him, advanced a few steps from the door, and then ftopt fhort, as one that waits in humble filence to be fpoken to.

The Doctor was feated in his fick chair; the lady oppofite to him and in full front of the interefting object that now ftood before her: it was a trying moment; fhe glanced a look upon him that would have told him where to find a mother, had he met her eyes. All the advantages of perfon were now reftored to him by change of drefs; but there were other circumftances ftill more attractive, that made this fecond interview peculiarly impreflive; what was at firft pre-fentiment was now become a certainty; the confcioufnefs that fhe was actually in prefence of a new-discovered unacknowledged fon, ftruck on her heart like an electric fhock, as fudden and as fwift. She fstarted, fhivered, and with difficulty refrained from crying out, as Nature prompted her, “ My fon, my fon!” The very counterpart of that engaging form, that won her virgin heart, and triumphed over all reftraints of duty and difcretion, was in her eye; ’twas Delapoer himfelf reftored to youth, or rifen from the grave; the fame fine fymmetry of fhape, the fame rich glow of manly beauty, that

that once so fatally had charmed her in the father, was here transfused into the son, and brought past scenes so full into review, as almost made them present.

"Henry," says she, "I find I have a claim in you, that by the death of Ratcliffe now devolves upon me in full right and title: the object of his care henceforth belongs to me, and therefore wonder not to see me thus affected by surprize and pity, having discovered you to be the relict of my much-lamented friend. Ah, my dear child, (so let me call you now) my tears shall mix with your's in watering the grave of that invaluable man."

Here her voice failed, her agitation became extreme, and a discharge of tears came seasonably to her relief. What portion of them appertained to the mother's share, what to the friend's, I leave for nature to decide. "And now, Henry," resumed she, "confiding in your discretion, I take you by the hand for life, pledging myself for your future fortune, and promising to stand by you in the place of a mother, till the mystery of your birth shall be revealed, and even of that I would not have you despair. I observe with pleasure you have put yourself into mourning for your friend, which is highly proper and commendable in
you ;

you ; and as you must have exhausted your small supply, I shall provide for your occasions in such a manner as will enable you to support the character of a gentleman, in which you are so well qualified to move, and wherein I shall not cease to uphold you. The misfortunes you have encountered since your hasty departure from your patron's house, and the indignities you have suffered in this place, are now recompensed to you by the happy providence that has thrown you upon the protection of one whose arms, like those of a parent, are open to receive you. In what line of life to dispose of you, must be matter of some reflection, and I shall advise with my uncle Manstock on the subject, who was equally with myself, a very cordial friend to poor Ratcliffe. At the same time, my dear child, if you have formed any wishes, and have any predilection for one profession rather than another, let me be acquainted with them ; remember only that it must be the profession of a gentleman, and your connections in the mean while must be such only as are suitable to that character. The poor widow and honest Ezekiel, who have harboured you in your distress, shall be recompensed for their hospitality ; but I should think

think you may now accommodate yourself better, and perhaps it may be the more expedient for you to situate yourself elsewhere, as I understand that the daughter of dame May is now in the house with you, and you may well believe that people's tongues will not be idle upon that occasion: indeed I have already heard very strong aspersions cast upon that young woman and yourself, in the hearing of my Lord; but as they came from that malicious being Blachford, I gave little credit to what he said, not doubting but you will have too much consideration for yourself and me, as well as too much principle, to form any sort of connection with a girl like Susan May."

Here she cast a scrutinizing eye upon Henry, whose cheeks were crimson, conscious as he was of some certain sensations, which these admonitory words did not exactly accord with. He was however at no loss for terms the most proper and becoming to address Lady Crowbery in, neither did he omit to set her mind at ease with respect to Susan May. Of Blachford he spoke without reserve, reprobating the baseness of his attack upon an innocent character; and saying, that if there were any
evil

evil designs in meditation against that poor girl, he was persuaded they were harboured only in his treacherous heart. He professed a wish of remaining a short time longer in his present quarters, as he feared it would carry the appearance of pride and ingratitude to the good people, who had so kindly entertained him, were he to turn his back upon them in so abrupt a manner. As to any preference for one profession or employ above another, he said he had been in no condition to indulge such ideas, or presume that it could in any case be referred to him as matter of choice; necessity had been his mistress, and in his late extremity he had seen no other prospect before him for earning a subsistence but by carrying a musket in the service of his king:—
“ There,” added he, “ I might have laboured usefully, or perished honourably; for private service I was little qualified, as my late kind master, now present, can witness; and perhaps I had besides some constitutional repugnancies, which do no credit to my humility, and are the consequences of an education given me by an indulgent patron, that filled my mind with higher notions than were suited to my fortune.”—Then raising his eyes, and directing a look,

look, animated with the tenderest expression of gratitude and devout affection to his amiable benefactress—"But you, Madam," said he, "have commanded me to entertain hopes more aspiring than I ever ventured to indulge in my happiest days. In what words can I express my thanks? I have no power to give them utterance. Pardon me, I beseech you, and pity my confusion: I would fain speak, but cannot; there is something at my heart, I know not what, too full, too vast, I cannot give it vent. Oh! my rever'd, my heaven-inspir'd protectress, whose condescending goodness deigns to take upon yourself the tender office of a parent to me, a nameless creature, let me for this one moment feed upon the fond persuasion that I am your son, and kneeling at your feet, embracing them, and bathing them with tears of filial love and gratitude, pour out that flood which else would burst my heart."

The emotions which this energetic address raised in the maternal heart of Lady Crowbery, who saw her unacknowledged son now kneeling at her feet, were such as description cannot reach; she had thrown her arms about his neck, and was on the very instant point of declaring

declaring herself to him, when at once a sudden crash stopt the words upon her lips; the door of the chamber burst inwards, and, sprawling with her face upon the floor and her heels in the air, behold the person of old Bridget! Instantly the lady gave a scream, and started from her chair; Henry nimbly recovered his legs, conscious that the posture he was in could not be too suddenly shifted; whilst Zachary roared out with astonishment, making several demands in the name of the devil; to which Bridget, either being, or affecting to be, stunned by her tumble, declined a reply, till being repeatedly urged by the authority aforesaid to give some account of herself, and not finding it convenient to give the true one, she pretended to have slipped down as she was passing hastily from her mistress's chamber, and falling with her whole weight against the door, burst it open: in the mean time Jemima's bell ringing a furious peal, Zachary bade her be-gone for a blundering old fool; which, as Henry had now set her on her feet, she thought fit to obey, and departed without more words.

In fact she had effected pretty nearly all the purposes of her commission, having spied out

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enough

enough to form a very sufficient report of the lady's good liking for Henry ; and as she had seen her throw her arms about his neck, without hearing what passed between them on the occasion, it must be owned she had stronger circumstances in proof than commonly fall to the share of reporters in cases of the like nature.

From too great zeal to discover more than the small horizon of a key-hole was calculated to disclose, Bridget had pressed so incautiously upon the door, that the lock, which was none of the best, having treacherously given way, she fell as we have related headlong into the room, just in time to stop the telling of that secret, which was the most important that son could hear, or parent communicate.

Great was the uneasiness which this unlucky accident occasioned to Lady Crowbery ; and it was not without some pains on the part of Zachary she was dissuaded from taking certain conciliatory measures with the old woman, for sealing her lips, on the presumption of her having seen more than was prudent to make public ; but as he contended strongly for Bridget's incapacity of making observations, whilst
her

her face was on the floor, it was finally judged adviseable to let it pass in silence, and not create a danger by over-anxiety for preventing it. The alarm, however, had so disconcerted Lady Crowbery, that she had no resolution to renew the conference, much less to touch upon that interesting discovery she was on the point of making, when Bridget interrupted her; so that after a few words spent in recommending Henry to remain quiet and out of sight at the cottage, till he heard from her again, she hastened to her fair companion, who was waiting for her in the carriage, and departed.

CHAPTER IV.

Nothing so furious as a Woman scorned.

IT may well be supposed that Bridget lost no time in making her mistress acquainted with the cause of the disturbance and noise she had heard in the Doctor's chamber, and also of what she had there discovered: as she could give no account of their conversation, which was carried on in too low a key to reach her ears on the outside of the door, Jemima was left to her own imagination

for finding out motives for a lady's embracing a handsome young man, whilst he was kneeling at her feet, and these, according to Jemima's notions, could be but of one sort; she therefore set it down for certain in her own mind, that Lady Crowbery was desperately in love with Henry, that her house was made a house of assignation, and her husband pander to an intrigue of the most bare-faced nature.

These conclusions she had no sooner formed, than she discerned at a glance all the advantages they gave her in a certain project, which she had long meditated, without being able to bring it into any practicable shape. Henry, who seemed to have escaped out of her hands, was by this lucky circumstance more than ever at her mercy; and though she was sensibly piqued at the preference given to a rival very little her junior in age, and, in her own opinion at least, not at all her superior in charms, yet she was well pleased to be paid for her mortification, by having possession of a secret, the suppression of which no sacrifice on his part could be too great for, whilst there was such a person in being as Lord Crowbery; neither was she sorry to find that Henry's
scruples

scruples were not so general as she thought them, nor his virtue above price: the inference she drew from all this was, that the menace of a discovery so fatal to both parties, could not fail to draw him into her measures, as effectually as Lady Crowbery's money had bribed him into her's; and as delicacy was no part of Jemima's character, whose passions were as violent as her soul was mean, the heart of Henry was not her object; nor were any gratifications unacceptable to her, because not granted with good will, for pleasure was pleasure in her calculation of it, though it were extorted by terror, or gained by artifice and trick.

Her first care, therefore, was to bind Bridget to strict secrecy for the present, that so the parties, being under no alarm, might continue their meetings, till proofs of a more decisive nature might be obtained against them: her next solicitude was to procure an interview with Henry, and for this purpose she dispatched the old woman to way-lay him before he left the house. This succeeded to her wish, for he no sooner received her summons than he obeyed it, prompted, as we may presume, by desire to ascertain, from her conversation,

versation, whether any reports had been made to her that might affect Lady Crowbery.

Upon his presenting himself to Jemima, she received him with an air of joyful surprize, congratulating him on his good fortune, and praising Lady Crowbery to the skies for her charity: she assured him of the sincere pleasure she took in seeing him thus happily extricated out of all his trouble, and by the favour of his kind patroness raised to a situation, which so well became him; and as she was persuaded that his noble friend would not fail to go through with the good work she had set her hand to, she could not suppose that Goody May's cottage would be any longer a fit residence for him, either on his own account or the lady's. "Was it not better," she asked, "for him to abide where he was, where his good friend might see him as often as she thought fit, without drawing any body's eyes upon her, as she was in daily habits of consulting the Doctor, and of course her visits wou'd be pass'd to his account.

Upon Henry's observing that Lady Crowbery's actions required no cover, she quickly replied, that nobody held that lady's character in higher esteem than herself: that she knew
well

well enough she had nothing to fear on the score of reputation, if the world would report nothing but truth; but as such fair dealing was not to be expected, especially in her case, who had so many evil-minded spies upon her, and so morose a husband to deal with, she must think that too great caution could not be taken to provide against consequences—
“For alas! poor lady,” added she, “I am afraid, that with all her virtues and all her charities, she is scarce credited for the one by her jealous lord, and ill rewarded for the other by her thankless neighbours.”

Jemima carried on this hypocrisy with so much address, that Henry began to think she was sincere, at least he was persuaded that nothing had been said to her by Bridget, and of course nothing seen. As to his continuance at the cottage, he saw it nearly in the same light with Jemima; Lady Crowbery herself had stated objections to it, and his own reflections suggested many more; what Jemima had observed with respect to the commodiousness of her own house was perfectly well founded, and as she betrayed no one symptom of her former propensity, but talked and looked with composure and sedateness, he was

half inclined to accept of her proposal. There were other thoughts, however, that crossed him in this determination, and they required further reflection. He saw all the danger of his situation with Lady Crowbery; the ardour with which she had clasped him in her arms was more than he could account for, and gave him serious alarm; gratitude had prompted him, in an unguarded moment, to throw himself on his knees at her feet; the emotion on his part was natural, and the source from which it sprung pure and respectful, but what could be the motive with a person of her delicacy and decorum for a mark of sensibility so extraordinary and unexpected? Charity he could well understand to be kind and condescending, but charity is not called upon to embrace, to caress the object it relieves. The act was an indication of something more than pity; it followed upon his claiming her protection as a parent, and it seemed to be inspired by all the tenderness and affection of the character she adopted: How was he to interpret it?

Whilst he was silently revolving these thoughts in his mind, Jemima's eyes were fixed upon him, and the same contemplation that
inspired

inspired her with hope, inspired her with desire: the colour rushed into her cheeks, her countenance underwent a change, that did not escape him—"Henry," she said, "I hope you are resolved to accept my invitation; I have every disposition to be your friend that you can wish me to have; I will serve you, assist you, accommodate you in all points and purposes, and be as secret as your own thoughts: with my friendship your fortune is made, without it you are ruin'd, lost and undone."

Henry stared at her with surprize; he saw the storm gathering, but knew not where it would burst; nor could rightly divine what either her promises or her menaces alluded to: he desired her to explain herself.

She paused for recollection, and seemed hesitating whether to proceed or to retract: probably it was her wish that she had not precipitated herself into this dilemma, till matters had been riper for her purpose, but she had already gone too far to avail herself of a retreat; it was too late, the die was cast, and she must stand to the throw. "Well then," she cried, "since you do not, or will not, understand me, sit down, and I

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will,

will, as you desire, explain myself to you without reserve. To prove to you therefore in a word how sincerely I mean to deal with you, I shall begin by confessing to you honestly and freely that I love you: Nay, do not start from me, nor meditate an escape, for accordingly as you treat my secret I will treat your's; therefore I must be heard: yes, Henry, I love you; but take notice, I am not so unreasonable as to aim at engrossing either your attentions or affections; nay, I am so much your friend, that I am content to be second and subordinate in your regards, for I will not stand in the way of your better fortune, nor traverse any of your plans and assignments with a richer, if not a fairer, lady; but where I know, and can depose upon oath, that you have been fast lock'd in her arms, I tell you ingenuously that mine shall not be long empty, nor shall my passion be slighted, whilst Lady Crowbery's is gratified."

Horror-struck with this dreadful alternative, Henry remained for some moments deprived as it should seem both of sense and motion, and incapable of a reply. To chuse between infamy and ruin, had the danger been all his own, would have cost him little deliberation; but

but the first gloomy prospect that opened upon him, was that of his benefactress sacrificed on his account; he saw her in his imagination summoned before her surly tyrant, arraigned, condemned, and delivered over to infamy and disgrace: At the same time his very nature revolted from the loathsome means proposed for preventing this calamity; and was it after all a security to be relied upon? What secret could be safe with a character so abandoned, and a temper so outrageous, as Jemima's? None: to what purpose then should he involve himself in turpitude and guilt, when he could neither keep misfortune from his benefactress by such measures, nor endure his own remorse of conscience in the mean time? And though innocence might not serve either Lady Crowbery or himself as a defence against the malice of Jemima and the injustice of my Lord, yet was he well convinced that nothing in this life could compensate for the loss of it: So far, however, he would yield to the pressure of the moment for the sake of gaining time, as not to irritate Jemima's temper by too peremptory a repulse: He attempted therefore to soothe her by the following expostulation:

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“ Though I take Heaven to witness that I am as innocent in thought and deed towards the lady you allude to as the child unborn; and though from my soul I believe she is as pure in nature as unsullied snow; yet I know the peril she would incur, and can well conceive the malicious interpretation her innocence wou’d be expos’d to, was you so cruelly bent upon her destruction, as to set forth the circumstance, which Bridget has reported to you, in its worst colours to her ungenerous lord: I know how easy it would be for prejudice like his by false constructions to represent an expression of pity as an act of criminality, and turn the world against her to the ruin of her reputation: But this wou’d be a degree of inhumanity which can never enter into your heart; I am persuaded your nature is not capable of compassing the destruction of an amiable and innocent woman by such horrid means. For my part, sooner than I wou’d be party in such a deed, I wou’d meet death itself, in whatever shape of terror and torment it approach’d me; and believe me, Madam, could I suspect you capable of going these lengths in revenge for any want of attention, which your partiality for me might interpret
into

into slights, I would rather my life should atone for the offence, than that Lady Crobbery's peace or reputation should be sacrificed through my ill-conduct or neglect."

"Very well," replied *Jemima*, "then it is in your power to decide upon the fate of that lady, who is so infinitely dear to you, by proportioning your attentions to the value that you set upon my secrecy."

"Prove me then," he cried; "tax me to the extent of my capacity in any honest services, and mark if I decline the trial."

"Honest services!" she repeated; "what are they? I have made a fair confession to you, *Henry*, and I will not be trifled with."

"I presume," answered he, "you have a sense of that religion you profess so zealously; you have a proper feeling for the dignity and delicacy of your sex; you have a recollection of those solemn promises, to which you pledg'd your faith at the altar—"

"I have a proper sense," replied *Jemima*, "of your folly and impertinence, in preaching to me, who am established by faith beyond the reach of guilt or the possibility of falling."

"But I," interpos'd *Henry*, "who cannot boast such an all-availing faith, do not possess
fo

so qualifying a confidence; therefore I must request you will with patience hear a few words from me. The principles which nature and education have instill'd into my heart, are such as teach me to believe no faith can purify the soul which guilt defiles. This doctrine was impress'd upon me by that best of friends, for whose lamented loss I am now in mourning. He was a father to me in effect, though of my real parents I am ignorant. At his death I became destitute, and in that state of absolute distress was found and reliev'd by your worthy husband: Shall I repay him with the blackest treachery? To him I owe the happy chance that cast me on the protection of Lady Crowbery; she was the friend and patroness of my deceas'd benefactor, the Reverend Mr. Ratcliffe; for his sake she bestowed these bounties upon me, in tender recollection of his valued memory, and in pity for the relict of his care; whilst I was kneeling at her feet in grateful acknowledgment of her goodness, she threw her charitable arms upon my neck in pure benevolence."—"You own it then!" interpos'd Jemima; "'tis enough. Give me only to know that a woman of Lady Crowbery's cast, soft, sentimental, full of tender

der passions, and neglected by her husband, goes the length of taking a young fellow like you in her arms ; and I will take upon me to say, such a woman can have but one possible motive for what she does. Talk not to me of benevolence and charity : would she embrace a beggar ? would she press age and ugliness to her bosom ? No, no, Henry, you cannot impose upon me, nor do I believe you are yourself impos'd upon : you are at once the irresistible conqueror of us both, and the only difference between us is, that I have the sincerity to avow a passion for you, and she has the hypocrisy to disguise it."

This said, she turned towards him, and with out-spread arms was proceeding to embrace him, when starting back, he exclaimed—
" Hold, Madam ! I am not faint enough to subscribe to your opinions, nor quite so much of a sinner as to suit your purposes."

He now sprung out of the room, and left her in that state of mind, which is as little intitled to pity as it is calculated to excite envy.

AS our hero slowly directed his steps towards the hospitable cottage, pondering the preceding dialogue in his mind, a thousand distracting thoughts took possession of him by turns: sometimes he reproached himself for not having attempted to soothe Jemima with hopes and promises; at other times he almost doubted if he ought not to have sacrificed every scruple for Lady Crowbery's sake; again his spirit rose against such gross impurity, and the fallacy of the maxim 'of doing evil that good might come' struck him in full force.— "If innocence," he cried, "can be no otherwise protected than by the commission of guilt, let it shift for itself." To appeal to the Doctor was to rouse a suspicion in Jemima, that he had betrayed her to him, and that he foresaw would be the certain way to drive her upon retaliation; besides, he knew the amount of Zachary's authority, and how little good was to be looked for from his interference: to apprize Lady Crowbery of her danger was his anxious wish, but by what means he knew not, for neither interview nor letter seemed either

either easy or safe to undertake. Ezekiel's fidelity could not be doubted, but as a counsellor in this case, few men could be found less qualified.

Henry had now crossed the green, and was making towards the cottage, when he heard himself accosted by a man in a plain drab riding-coat, and booted, who asked him if that great house at a distance belonged to Lord Crowbery? Henry, who had just then little or no attention for any thing but the thoughts he was immersed in, stared rather wildly at the stranger, and in a peevish kind of tone answered, that he knew nothing at all of the matter.—“That is rather extraordinary,” replied the stranger, “for I think I saw you come from the house, where Lady Crowbery has been; and if you are bound to that cottage, you are going where she is.”—“And what is that to you, Sir?” demanded Henry, in the same tone, and abruptly turned away from him. He now quickened his pace, and, entering the cottage kitchen, found there Ezekiel and Dame May, who immediately gave him the signal for silence, telling him, in a whisper, that Lady Crowbery and Miss Manstock were in the inner room conferring with Susan;

Susan;—"And I hope," added the dame, "that our girl is in a way to get a place with one of them."

The good dame conjectured rightly, for those ladies had been questioning Susan May upon certain preliminary circumstances, proper to be well explained before any overture was made on Miss Manstock's part for hiring her as her waiting-woman. The points, which Susan had to clear, were simply what arose from the aspersions Blachford had cast upon her with respect to Henry; and being straitly interrogated on the subject by Lady Crowbery, she answered, without prevarication or reserve, that to be sure she could not deny a very sincere esteem for Henry, as who could help liking one every way so worthy and so engaging? but as to what that base man, Mr. Blachford, imputed to her, she denied it utterly. It would be well for him, she observed, if he had one grain of that honour which Henry possessed, in such a degree, that she believed he would die a thousand deaths rather than be guilty of such baseness as that vile man had meditated against her: she then related the particulars of his attempt upon her when she solicited him to release Henry from the stocks.

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When both ladies had joined in expressing their just abhorrence of such proceeding, with proper commendations of Susan's conduct, she again resumed her confession of attachment to Henry; and after a very animated enumeration of his many excellent qualities, mental and personal, concluded by humbly asking pardon of her hearers for intruding so long upon their patience.—“But you, Madam,” said she, addressing herself to Lady Crowbery, “I know to be so kind and considerate, that I am sure you will forgive a poor girl like me if I have said too much, for you know a heart too full will overflow; and to be sure, though I have not the most distant idea of aspiring to Mr. Henry, who I dare say is as much above me in birth as he is in merit and understanding, yet I hope it is no sin to love him, to pray for his happiness and prosperity, and to bless and reverence, as from my soul I do, all those who are good to him, and your ladyship above all.”

Susan ceased, and whilst the tears flowed from her soft eyes, a sympathetic shower bedewed the cheeks of Lady Crowbery; the lovely Isabella (for lovely she was, gentle reader, and fair beyond my powers of description) was so pleased

pleased with the sincere and natural character of the girl, that turning to her with a gracious smile, and addressing her in a voice as tunable as the lyre of Apollo, she said, "I am so charmed with your sincerity, Susan, that if my place is acceptable to you, we are agreed: from this moment you belong to me; and if the malice of Mr. Blachford attempts still to pursue you, depend upon it neither he nor his slander will find admission where I am. As for your attachment to this young person, whom you describe so amiable, though my hard heart has never been touched by the passion of love, and I do not so much as guess what it means, I have nevertheless all the compassion in life for those who suffer by it; and for you, Susan, in particular, who are out of hope of obtaining the object you admire. You must therefore strive to forget him as fast as you can, which, I shou'd suppose, you can find no difficulty in doing."

Susan shook her head, but said nothing: a certain look, which Lady Crowbery bestowed upon her fair cousin, was perhaps not misinterpreted, when she corrected herself by saying, —"I conclude I have been blundering upon something perfectly absurd, which is not to be wonder'd

wonder'd at when one talks without understanding what one talks about. You know, cousin, I have never been in Susan's situation; and as all my wishes have been constantly prevented by an indulgent father, I really never felt what cou'd seriously be called a disappointment of any sort: in love, at least, I can venture to say, I am pretty secure."—"Don't be too secure," cried Lady Crowbery, tapping her gently on the cheek as she rose from her chair. And now the ladies, followed by Susan May, entered the room, where Ezekiel, Henry, and Goody May, were assembled.

The happy news was here announced, of Susan's being preferred to wait upon the person of Miss Manstock. This was the height of all earthly happiness that could befall the mother of Susan; and if she herself did not welcome it with quite the same transport, it was not want of value for her young mistress, that damped her joy, for all the neighbourhood rung with Isabella's praise, and Sir Roger Manstock was universally beloved; but there was a pang at the heart of that fond girl, which in the very moment of her good fortune drew a sigh from her breast, and directed her eyes towards Henry with the most pensive expression:

sion: this glance was not unnoticed by Isabella, who followed it in its passage to the countenance of our hero, which being just then overspread with a tender blush, and charactered with the finest touches that pity and benevolence could give it, was perhaps in nature the most dangerous object that a young lady, who had so lately set love at defiance, could encounter; and, was I poetically given, I should here take occasion to introduce that revengeful deity taking aim from behind the person of my hero, like Teucer covered by the shield of Ajax, and launching at the heart of Isabella one of his swiftest and most fatal arrows. Certain it is, there was some busy messenger or other, that flitted in that moment on his malicious errand, and whispering in her ear, forewarned her, that the god of love was not to be affronted with impunity. The same, perhaps, or some sister spirit equally bent upon mischief, threw an accident in the way of their returning in the carriage, by taking off a shoe from one of the horses, and compelling the driver to resort to the blacksmith for a repair of the damage.

This being reported, Isabella quickly proposed a walk through the plantations, which
her

her lady cousin as quickly closed with, happy in the excuse for taking her beloved Henry with her. It was in vain therefore that the foolish servant assured his lady the jobb would be done in a few minutes; his evidence was instantly dismissed, and the ladies adjusting their cloaks, set forward without listening to any further demur, accompanied by our hero, blooming with every modest grace that beauty, youth, and sensibility, could unite to adorn him with.

When they entered the plantation they were secure from being overlooked, and then the mother, whose heart yearned towards her new-discovered treasure, pretending to want support, passed her arm under his, and instinctively pressed it to her heart, giving him at the same time a look of unutterable fondness. The action was so marked as not to be misunderstood: Henry felt it, and turned pale with alarm; seized with a sudden faintness, he seemed not less in want of support than the lady herself: she saw his change of countenance, she perceived him tremble as she leant upon him, and perfectly comprehended all the delicacy and distress of his sensations: concealment was no longer generous, it was no longer

longer safe; nay, it was now no longer in her power. He had stopt short from incapacity to proceed; their mutual embarrassment was too conspicuous to be overlooked by Isabella, had she been ever so industriously accommodating; but of these arts she was perfectly ignorant, and had already run to the assistance of her cousin, very naturally alarmed at her situation, and was tendering a bottle of salts to her; when that lady, in the tenderest tone, exclaimed,—“Oh! my sweet friend, my beloved Isabella, judge not unfavourably of me for the uncommon sensibility, the strong emotions, which you see me seized with: I knew the parents of this youth; dear to me they were as my own life, near as the blood that flows from my own heart.”—Here she fell upon Henry’s neck, and in her agony sobbed aloud.

At this instant the person of the Viscount was seen advancing towards them in the same walk: there was no further time for explanation; scarce a moment remained for reflection; Henry was bidden to retire with all speed; Lady Crowbery struggled to compose herself for the dreadful rencontre; the affectionate Isabella was employed in cheering and supporting

supporting her; but the interval was momentary, and my Lord at hand.

It was so unusual a thing with him to walk at this hour of day, and in this place, that nothing could be more unlooked for than this meeting: he had now seen with his own eyes a confirmation of what had already been reported to him by Blachford. That gentleman, enraged at seeing all his designs upon Susan May traversed by the interference of Henry, and her resignation of Jemima's service, had paid a visit to that disconsolate dame within a very few minutes after our hero had left her in a state of mind little short of absolute phrenzy: inflamed as she was to the height with rage, indignation, and revenge, the flattering attentions of that insidious visitor, whose gross appetites could *batten on a moor*, gained thereby the knowledge of an important discovery, and she the gratification of a revengeful passion, well knowing to what malicious purposes he would apply the secret she had imparted to him.

The meeting between the Viscount and his lady, from which so many dreadful reproaches were expected, went off without any; a few words in passing, and those addressed to miss

Manstock, were all that occurred; but Lady Crowbery discovered enough in the fullness of his look to awaken all her apprehensions, nor was she deceived in her observations: My Lord pursued his way towards Justice Blachford's, and the ladies held on their walk and their discourse till they arrived at the castle.

As soon as Henry had passed the plantation-gate that opened upon the village-green, he was again accosted by the stranger in the horseman's coat, who told him he had just picked up a ring in the foot-path, which he conceived had been dropt there by Lady Crowbery as she passed, and begged him to take the charge of returning it to her, as he himself was upon the wing, and could not undertake the delivery of it in person.

Henry took the ring, examined it, was convinced that it belonged to Lady Crowbery; and recollecting that his former treatment of this person, when he broke in upon his meditations, had been none of the most courteous, he was the more desirous to make up for it by his civility on this occasion: the man seemed in that style of life as might be complimented on his honesty without an affront to his dignity.

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The ring was of value, for it consisted of a table diamond set in the shape of a heart, under which was a plait of hair, with the words *Cecilia Adamant*, neatly engraved upon the back of the setting. This, Henry observed, being the maiden-name of Lady Crowbery, was a proof of it's belonging to her, and he therefore suggested it to him as proper to be delivered by his own hands, the meanness of his appearance warranting to add, that he was persuaded that generous lady would wish to make a suitable return to the finder.—“ I understand your kind hint,” replied the man, “ and am thankful to you for it ; if her Ladyship should be pleased in her bounty to take any consideration for the finder of this trinket, be so good to tell her, it is a poor man lately returned from transportation, who will thankfully receive her favours through your hands ; but as I don't think it safe to put myself in the way of Lord Crowbery, circumstanced as I am, so I do most earnestly conjure you not to give the ring to my Lady in his presence, nor to let any intimation reach him that may expose me to be traced as the finder of it : for the present, it will not be prudent for me to tarry here any longer ; sometime hence I may call upon you again.”

again.”—“Sometime hence,” replied Henry, “I may chance not to be found here; but call at that cottage, and whatever is there deposited will be honestly delivered to you by the good people of the house: you know your own danger best, but if returning from transportation constitutes any part of it, I should think you had better have been silent on that head; however, you may depend upon it I shall not betray your trust either in one case or the other.”

“Sir,” rejoined the stranger, “permit me to say, there is something in your countenance that assures me I might repose greater trusts than this in your keeping without hazard; the good woman of the cottage you pointed to has made me acquainted with your adventures in this place, and you must allow me to say that I honour you from my soul; though I have been a guilty man in my time (which you will readily believe, having told you I am newly return’d from transportation) yet I love virtue, and reverence brave, humane and virtuous persons like you. I have been also told of Lady Crowbery’s generosity to you, and I applaud her for it; charity is a lovely quality, but frailty is of the very essence of woman; and

and I beseech you to recollect that Lady Crowbery is a wife."

This said, he hastily turned away, and before our hero could recover the surprize which a speech so unexpected had thrown him into, the stranger was out of sight.

CHAPTER VI.

A figurative Style is apt to puzzle a plain Understanding.

WHEN Henry returned to the cottage, he found Ezekiel sitting with old Weevil, the miller, who had come to report the convalescence of his son; and as he really bore a grateful mind towards our hero, it was with great pleasure he congratulated him on the happy change in his fortune and appearance: he then began to sound forth the praises of Lady Crowbery for her charities; and when he had run on in this strain for some time, frequently appealing to Henry, who made no reply, he looked at him with a degree of surprize, and said,—“How is this, friend Henry? You say nothing all this while.”—Our hero now answered, that if he was silent on the subject, it

was not from want of gratitude, but because he knew that Lady did not wish her good deeds to be talked of.—“Heyday!” cried Weevil, “what is the value of a good deed, if the world does not know it? For my part, if I do a man a kind turn, I am the first to let him hear of it; for where would be the pleasure of doing it else; and how can I expect a return of the same kindness, if I don’t let him understand from whence it came?”—Then turning to Ezekiel, who did not seem to relish his notions, and had exhibited certain tokens that they would not pass unquestioned, he demanded of him, with an air of raillery, if he preached such sort of charity as that lady was supposed to practise?

Ezekiel rose from his seat, and drawing himself up into an erect posture, as his custom was when he debated any interesting point—“Neighbour Weevil,” he cried, “you demand of me, as a preacher, if I recommend to my flock such sort of charity as this good lady practiseth; and I demand of thee, as a Christian, if thy pastor hath never taught thee that good lesson, “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth?”

“I hope I know that without his telling,”
quoth

quoth the miller, " for surely no man would put his hand into his neighbour's sack, and be fool enough to blazon his own shame ; I think he would be but a silly fellow, who did not keep his own counsel in such a case ; but that any one should be ashamed of giving away their alms, and take no credit for what they bestow, seems to me an unaccountable piece of business ; for why should I lay out my money and get nothing for it ? "

" And is it nothing," cried the preacher, elevating his voice, and rising on his insteps, " to purchase that divine sensation, which springs within the human breast when we relieve the sufferings of a fellow-creature ? Is the self-approving testimony of a good conscience nothing worth, unless echoed back upon thee by the applauses of the world ? The eye of the Almighty is upon the deeds of men, whether they be good or evil ; nay, more than that, it penetrates to the heart, and discerns the motives and secret springs which govern it. Is it not enough for man to know, that he, who seeth in secret, will reward us openly ? I hope friend Weevil, thou art not a man of that pharisaical kidney, as loveth greetings in the

market-place, and delighteth to blow a trumpet before thee."

" I blow a trumpet !" replied the miller, somewhat angrily ; " I don't know what you mean by suspecting me of such mountebank tricks ; and as for greetings in the market-place, whether I love 'em or not is no matter ; but I have plenty of them without asking for, for I don't go there without my money ; they are glad enough to greet me, friend Zekiel, for I am a fair trader, do you see, and neither blow trumpet or horn to call customers about me, and bring grist to my mill : No, no, if they like my dealings they are welcome ; if not, let 'em go elsewhere. If the mill were never to go till I blew a trumpet, it wou'd stand still to everlasting for me ; but I can't say so much for you, Doctor, in your way of trade ; you may be said to blow a trumpet, methinks, when you are perch'd up in a tree, hooting and howling and preaching the end of the world to a parcel of poor scar'd wretches, that are ready, through fright, to hang themselves upon the branches of it : this I call blowing a trumpet, master Zekiel," added he, " and such a trumpet it is, that with my good
will

will shall never enter these ears whilst they are fixt to my head."

"Be it so, scorner, be it so," replied the preacher: "if thy heart be harden'd even to the consistency of one of thine own mill-stones, whose misfortune is it but thine own? Pharaoh's heart was also in like case, he was harden'd against the warnings of the meek man Moses, and what was his fate? Whelm'd in the red sea, swallow'd up, drown'd, Gaffer Weevil, drown'd I say, as thou perchance may'st be for a judgment in thine own mill-tail; which, God forbid! for I would rather wish thee to live and to repent: nay, hath not a judgment fallen upon thee already, a terrible judgment, from which thou art newly escap'd? and wilt thou not obey the warning, as holy David obey'd, when the Lord smote the son of Bathsheba for his sins? Will nothing awaken thee but the last trump, thou deaf adder?"

Here Ezekial Daw turned his eyes towards the place, that had lately been occupied by the person of Weevil, and discovered nothing there within his ken save an old elbow-chair, literally as void of edification as the deaf adder; miller Weevil having neither carried that

away with him, nor one single word of instruction from the late expostulatory harangue. "I protest," quoth Ezekiel, as he looked about for Weevil, "the man hath disappear'd, and the *chair of the scorner* is left empty: Good hope," added he, sitting down in it at the same time, "I shall not offend against the Psalmist's precept by placing myself in his stead."

"No fear of that," said Henry, "the words are not to be taken in their literal sense"—
"Humph!" replied the preacher, "don't be too sure of that, young man; it is early day for such as thou art to set up for an expounder of holy writ."—"I beg pardon," answered the youth: "if I had been aware there could have been two opinions in the case, I should have held back my own till I heard what your's was."—"All is well," rejoined the other, "I do not reprove thee, child, but for thy good; I would warn thee against the example of that froward man, who hath newly departed in his error, and suddenly disappeared, whilst my eye was not upon him:"—A circumstance, that could hardly have happened to any other person than Ezekiel, whose eye, like the poet's, had been rolling in so fine a phrensy, that the miller and every other person about him might
have

have walked out of company at that moment without his seeing them.

The good man, who, as we have before observed, was only patient upon principle, had been not a little nettled at the retort of the trumpet, which being a martial instrument, had sounded a note in his ear, that had somewhat roused the natural ardour of his spirit; a hint, which we think fit to give to the sagacious reader, who might else conceive there was hardly cause sufficient for the vivacity of his reproof to our young hero, whose nature certainly was not prone to give offence, nor wanting in humility; in proof of which we take leave to add, that he quietly submitted to a long lecture from Doctor Daw upon that very virtue, of which it was plain he had a much greater share by nature than his teacher.

CHAPTER VII.

The Events of this Life are chequered with Good and Evil.

DAME May now returned to the cottage, having circulated the happy tidings of her daughter's promotion into every house of

the village, where she could find an acquaintance at leisure to give her the hearing; and as we are never better disposed to rejoice with others than when we are joyful ourselves, so it was with this good woman, whose heart, though naturally apt to sympathize, was at this moment in the best humour possible to take a friendly share in Henry's good fortune: whilst her eyes overflowed with pleasure at the sight of him in his new apparel, her tongue poured forth praises in abundance, and blessings without stint upon his generous benefactress.

The hostile cabal assembled at Blachford's were in the mean time projecting ways and means of revenge; for Lord Crowbery had joined them full fraught with what he called ocular demonstration of his lady's misconduct; for though he had observed a sullen silence when he met her in the plantation, nothing which there passed had escaped his observation; and the reader will recollect enough of her situation to acknowledge it was a very suspicious one: the credit of Jemima's intelligence, as reported to him by his friend Blachford, was now completely established, and his mind prepared for any measures of revenge, that could be proposed to him; but as it was
his

his practice in all cases of danger to keep himself out of sight, and put his proxies in the front, his caution did not forsake him upon the meeting with his lady, and he prudently forbore to waste any of his noble anger in words, not wishing either that Miss Manstock should witness them, or that Henry should be called to an altercation on the spot; whether because he deemed him too ignoble for his personal resentment, or too gallant to submit to his insult, must be left as matter of opinion; we do not wish to have any correspondence with his lordship's private meditations; as to his discussions with Lady Crowbery, he was very ingenious in selecting proper times and seasons for them. The cabal now sitting consisted of Blachford, Captain Crowbery of the marines, and Fulford, an attorney; gentlemen entirely devoted to his Lordship, and the major part at least not immoderately prejudiced by the secret dictates of justice, conscience, or honour.

The inmates of the cottage were now collected, for Susan had joined the party, but not with the same joyous spirits that her mother had brought amongst them; a secret melancholy seemed to weigh upon her heart, and Henry, who well divined the cause, between
compassion

compassion for her and alarm for Lady Crowbery, found ample occupation for his thoughts: as for Ezekiel Daw, the even tenor of his spirits was not apt to be discomposed either by the fortunate or unfortunate events of this life.

One of the first measures resolved upon by the cabal, had been to expel the tenants of the cottage from their humble abode; the tenement belonged to Blachford, and was held at will; so long as he foster'd any hopes of succeeding with the daughter, that considerate gentleman had been a very easy landlord to the mother; but now that he saw his designs blasted, first by her attachment to Henry, and secondly, by her engagement with Miss Manstock, his charity cooled so fast, that he commissioned Fulford the attorney not only to warn her mother from the premises, but also to enforce payment of certain arrears of rent, which he had abstained to demand from motives above-mentioned; nay, it was asserted on the part of the poor widow, that as far as any unwitnessed promise could avail, he had passed his word to her for an acquittal of the whole.

Charged with these instructions, Fulford

now

now presented himself to the party in the cottage, and in proper terms of office delivered himself of his commission. Goody May heard the warning, and demand accompanying it, with horror proportioned to the distress it menaced her with. The bounty of Lady Crowbery in consideration of her kindness to Henry, had just enriched her with a sum, which this demand so nearly involved, that she felt herself in imagination even poorer than she was before; her flattering hopes of peace and plenty vanished like a dream; stript by her deceitful creditor of all her stock of wealth, and thrust out of her cottage, she knew herself to be excluded in effect from the parish, where she had long dwelt in the good esteem of the villagers, and by the humble exercise of her art had hitherto contrived to earn a decent maintenance; it was a further aggravation to her sorrows, that in this distress her friend and inmate Ezekiel was to be a sharer: she fixed her eyes upon the countenance of the attorney, she saw no movements of compassion there; she then turned them upon her friends assembled around her, she drew no comfort from their looks, threw herself into a chair and burst into tears.

Ezekiel

Ezekiel seeing this, put himself between Fulford and the door, towards which he was retreating, and gently laying his hand upon his breast in the action of stopping him, with a steady look and solemn tone, addressed him in the following words—"Mr. Fulford, you are an attorney; and pity, though not unknown to some of your profession, is certainly no part of your business here; I shall not therefore trouble you by appealing to what it is evident you do not possess: whether this poor woman is at this instant furnished with money sufficient to discharge your demand, I cannot take upon me to say; I myself have some little matter in hand, which will be forth coming at her call."—"I have enough, and more than enough," cried Henry. —"Peace, young man," replied the preacher, "and interrupt me not: this gentleman's time is too precious to listen to the modes we shall take for raising the sum he requires of us, neither is his nature likely to be softened by any difficulties we are put to in providing it: with your leave, therefore, Mr. Attorney, we shall desire you will signify to your principal, that we do not oppose ourselves to the power which the law has given him
over

over us, for expelling us from his cottage: tell him we have received his orders, and are preparing to obey them, but say withal, that they have wrung the tears from the eyes of the widow, and let him prepare himself to answer the appeal that is gone up against him."

"Lookye, master Daw," replied Fulford, "how all that may be is another case, and *coram non nobis* as we say; my commission extends no farther than to the widow May; she is the party I am to look to; with respect to you I have no instructions, and for aught I know, you may have his worship's leave for remaining on the premises."—"How say you, sir?" exclaimed Ezekiel, "may I have his leave to abandon this poor widow? I will neither take his leave, nor his example, for any thing so base and dastardly: he shall never teach me to be cruel like himself, he shall never seduce me to make promises of protection and afterwards revoke them; I reject his favour, and will persist in my integrity."

"You know your own business best," quoth Fulford; "I am to look for the rent, or distrain to the amount."—"Name it," cried Henry, "produce your bill, I am prepared to

to discharge it"—"And who are you," replied Fulford, "that take upon yourself to speak to a gentleman in so peremptory a stile?"—"I speak to you," said Henry, "as I shou'd to your principal"—"Speak then to my principal," replied the attorney; and turning on his heel, quitted the company.

Before he had gone many paces from the door, Isabella, accompanied by her father, entered the cottage: Goody May had not yet dried her tears, and the cause of them being enquired into by her worthy visitors, gave her an opportunity of relating what had passed. Sir Roger Manstock, whose heart was ever open to a case of pity, and who well knew the hateful character of Blachford, bade her be comforted, for that he would provide her with a habitation on his own estate, and in the near neighbourhood of her daughter, where she should be at least as well lodged and better protected than she was at present—"As for the little matter of rent," added he, "which Mr. Blachford thinks fit to exact of you, notwithstanding his word to the contrary, if one of you will step out and call back the attorney, we will discharge it on the spot."

Henry flew upon the errand, and was at
Blachford's

Blachford's door in an instant, where that gentleman was then standing with Fulford at his elbow. At the name of Sir Roger Manstock he started, swelled with pride and passion, and strode away with hasty steps to the cottage, ordering the attorney to follow him.

"Give me leave," said he, as he set his foot within the door, "to tell you, Sir Roger Manstock, that I do not hold it proper behaviour from one gentleman to another to interfere between me and my tenant, and spirit her out of my house for the invidious purpose of casting an odium upon my character, as if I was a tyrant and persecutor of the poor: I would have the world to know that I have as much humanity as yourself or any man breathing, and I don't see what right you have to take for granted that I intend to go the length of driving this woman out of her house at any rate."

"Mr. Blachford," replied the venerable baronet, "you have put an interpretation upon my motives so contrary to what has ever governed my actions, that I should be warranted in making no reply to your invectives; but I am an old man pretty well known in this neighbourhood, and little afraid of being misunderstood by any body but yourself. If your attorney

attorney did not warn this poor widow from her house by your authority, I have stept into a business by mistake, which does not belong to me; if, on the contrary he did, I have as much right to take her into my protection, as you can have to put her out of your's, and that protection I will give, though your persecution should extend to every other person under this roof."

Blachford's dusky visage turned purple with rage, he gnawed his lip, knit his sooty brows, and sullenly replied, "It is no concern of mine how many vagabonds you take into your house, so mine is clear of them."—Upon the instant stept forward our young hero, and darting a look like that which our immortal bard bestows upon the seraph Abdiel before he encounters the grand apostate.—"Now," said he, "your virulence so clearly points at me, that I am warranted to reply to you; and first, I tell you, I will not permit you to lose the respect due to a venerable character, which none but one devoid of every manly, every virtuous feeling, would have the baseness to defame: in the next place, I have a word for you in answer to the aspersions you have thrown out against this innocent young woman,

man, in which you have brought my honour into question, and for which you ought to blush, knowing your own infamous attempts upon her person; but as your turpitude is such, that to speak of it in this presence would be a breach of decency, I desire you will step out with me, and I will breathe one word in your ear; which, if you have the spirit of a man, you will know how to reply to."

This said, Henry stepped nimbly out of the door, and Blachford, attended by his lawyer, fullenly followed.—"In the name of the Lord," cried Ezekiel, grasping his crab-stick, "I will also go forth."—At this moment Isabella gave a sigh, and fell back in her chair.

CHAPTER VIII.

How deep and secret are the Seeds of Love!

AS soon as Blachford was on the outside of the door, Henry, who had stooped for him, accosted him, and said, "I now repeat to you, that your attempt upon Susan May was infamous; and that when you told Lord Crobbery that innocent girl had been criminal with me, you told a most impudent and abominable lie."—

lie.”—“Very well, Sir,” replied Blachford, “I shall not talk with you now: you shall hear from me in another way.”—The cowardly bully flunk away, and Henry returned to the cottage, but not till Ezekiel, brandishing his crab-stick, had marched up to him, and declared, with an observation little short of an oath, that if he had turned out with the Justice, he himself would have undertaken for the attorney, and—“Grace of God,” added he, “I trust I should have smitten him to the earth, even thereafter as the prophet Samuel smote Agag.”

When Henry entered the cottage, he found the women anxiously employed in bringing Isabella out of a swoon.—“Heaven defend me,” he exclaimed, “what is the matter?” Dame May had dropt some hartshorn into water; Henry, scarce knowing what he did, seized the cup, and presented it to the lips of the drooping beauty; at that moment she opened her eyes—“And are you safe?” she said, then took the contents of the cup, and presently revived.

In a few minutes Isabella was perfectly recovered, and when Sir Roger Manstock began to express himself in the kindest terms to Henry:

Henry: he required to know what had passed between him and Blachford; exhorted him very earnestly not to enter into any quarrel with a man of so malicious a character, and very cordially invited him to take refuge in Manstock-house — “For I am persuaded,” said he, “that both Blachford, and, I am sorry to add, Lord Crowbery himself, will set every engine at work to play off some diabolical plot upon you.”

“Indeed, Sir,” said Isabella, turning her eyes upon him with the tenderest expression, “you are in the greatest danger whilst you remain amongst them; my dear father gives you the best counsel, and you will do well to get out of their way; for only think what affliction it would give to my poor cousin, if any harm was to befall you.”

“She is infinitely good,” replied Henry, “and her solicitude gives some value to a life, which, circumstanced as it was a while ago, would scarce have merited my care.”—“If that be so,” resumed Isabella, “I am confident it is her wish that you should accept my father’s invitation; and, after what I have now been a witness to, permit me to say, it is mine also.”—“You honour me too much,” replied he,

he, "and I can make no other return to such unmerited kindness, than by assuring Sir Roger Manstock and yourself of my unalterable respect and gratitude."

This point being so settled, the worthy baronet and his fair daughter took their leave of the good people, Sir Roger having shaken Henry very cordially by the hand, and assured him of a hearty welcome at Manstock-house. Upon their arrival at the castle, they found Lady Crowbery alone, and employed at her writing table; their carriage was at the door, and they had called to bid her farewell. Sir Roger related to her all that had been passing at the cottage, and said so many handsome things of Henry, both with respect to his behaviour, person and spirit, that whilst her heart trembled for his safety, it overflowed with joy upon hearing him so praised.—"And now," said the baronet, "we must think of something for him out of hand, for there is a deal of malice brewing against him in the hearts of this Blachford and his crew: he has a gallant spirit; I think his turn seems to lie towards the army."

"It is too clear," replied Lady Crowbery, "what dangers beset him, and with whom they
spring:

spring: that I shall have my share in them, I can well believe; I expect no less, and am preparing myself to meet it. In the mean time, to remove him to some place of safety seems the first thing needful; of his future destination we may decide at leisure."—"But my father," cried Isabella, "has invited him, and he is coming to Manstock-house."—Lady Crowbery smiled; but whether it was from the joy she took in the intelligence, or from something she observed in the eagerness of Isabella's manner, or from a mixture of causes, we must leave to conjecture; certain it is, that the finest eyes in nature were just then illuminated with uncommon vivacity, and the sweetest countenance overspread with a blush, whose exquisite carnation no art can imitate.

After a few minutes spent in making their affectionate adieus, they parted; Sir Roger Manstock and his fair daughter to their own home, and Lady Crowbery resumed her pen; the productions of which, it is more than probable, our readers will hereafter be acquainted with.

We shall now look back to the cottage, where the agitation in which we left our friends, had not yet subsided. Ezekiel was

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gone forth upon the Green, and being there joined by several of his neighbours, with whom he was in general favour, had been giving them a valedictory harangue, with some occasional comments upon Justice Blachford's inhumanity to the widow; that good woman, in the mean while, who had not the fault of keeping an idle tongue, was no less busy in a different quarter; and perhaps there was not a corner in the parish where she was not beloved and the Justice abhorred, so that all voices were loud in her cause; even John Jenkins, a fellow of notorious levity, and the obstreperous cow-boy, his brother, were on the side of the sufferers, and joined in the cry against their village-tyrant with the rest.

Henry and Susan alone kept house; he pondering on a variety of interesting matters, she probably on only one object, and that before her eyes. Opportunities like the present she had little prospect of in future; her heart fluttered, her spirits wavered betwixt hope and despair: she sighed, and gently resting her arm upon his shoulder, "Alas! for me," she cried, "my happy hours have been but few, and they are past: You'll think no more of me when this fine lady occupies your heart: I see it coming

ing on, I see it plainly."—"Impossible!" he replied, "my thoughts are otherwise employ'd; they never can aspire so high."—"Ah, Henry!" resumed she, "this is but feign'd humility; you've seen enough to know that I am right: You and I shall take no more such walks together as we have done; you will have a fairer companion in your rambles through the groves at Manstock; and let me own 'tis fit you shou'd; I am not worthy of you; you are in all respects above me, and it was only in your distress'd and humble state that I aspir'd to think of you, to comfort with you, and to love you: If I have been too forward, and offended you, do not remember me with contempt, but pardon a fond girl that can never cease to bear you a devoted faithful heart."

Susan never looked so lovely in the eyes of Henry as at this moment: the melancholy tone in which these words were uttered, the modest air accompanying their delivery, her sighs, her tears, her blushes, touched him more sensibly than all the playful smiles that in her gayer moments she had glanced upon him. Every thing that his compassionate nature could suggest to console and soothe her he said and did without reserve, for every passion seemed now

buried in affliction ; and as for such careffes as honour might allow of, he deemed it cruelty to withhold them.—But here let me insert one caution to my youthful readers how they surrender themselves to the indulgence of that dangerous propensity called pity, which, if it is not love itself, is yet so closely allied to it, that wherever the interests of the one can be served, there is no safety in committing yourselves to the other. Of the truth of this remark our inexperienced Henry may serve for an example ; seduced by pure compassion into the office of a comforter, he found himself surprized into emotions, which it required the strongest resolution to controul ; and so gentle was the current, so pleasingly deceitful the gradations by which he was carried on towards that gulph, where honour would have been lost, that had not the recollection of his late reproach to Blachford timely warned his conscience to avoid the guilt which he condemned in another, he had here been overthrown, and we must have devoted one unwilling page to the lamented record of his shame ; for opportunity courted him, beauty smiled upon him, love allured, and Susan whispered an inviting challenge in his ear, that fairly set all prudence at defiance ; in short, malicious Fortune

tune

tune seemed to have trepann'd him into a situation with this tempting girl, exactly of a piece with their's, to whose incontinence he owed his birth.

"Then I must marry you," was his apology to Susan's rash proposal.—"I ask no such sacrifice," replied the damsel.—"This hospitable roof will fall upon my head."—"Away with all such scruples," she again replied, and press'd him in her arms.—"'Tis a hard struggle!" he exclaimed, "but, by the Power that guards me, I will never be a Blachford!"—With these words he sprung from her embrace: the snares of love, that had so nearly closed upon him, gave way, and burst at once; the vanquished passions fled, and Virtue put her wreath of triumph on his brow!

A momentary glance of anger darted from the eyes of Susan, as she exclaimed,—"Heavens! can you use me thus?" But it was only a glance; resentment had no lasting tenure in her breast; her heart, though liable to be surprised by love, was not surrendered to dishonour: She rallied her disordered thoughts, looked back upon the past with conscious self-reproach for her own desperation, and, covered with confusion, hid her face.

CHAPTER IX.

A Funeral Oration out of Place.

IN the council, that fate upon the fate of Henry, there were as many opinions as there were members: Fulford, who looked for no resources but what were to be found in his own profession, recommended the ejection; and of this we have already seen the result, which certainly was not very flattering to the projector.

Captain Crowbery, whose ideas, like those of Fulford, were of the professional sort, was for bolder measures, and undertook, through his interest with a friend, who commanded a press-gang then upon the coast, to take our hero off, unknown to all his friends, and ship him in a tender: This proposal, which did not interfere with the legal proceeding before mentioned, nor involve any one of the junto either in difficulties or dangers, was universally approved of, and had in fact every merit that a revengeful plot could boast of: It was therefore resolved, *nem. con.* that the Captain should set forth in search of his friend, and concert the means of carrying it into execution secretly and securely;

Lord

Lord Crowbery enjoying by anticipation, the agonies of his Lady when her favourite should disappear on a sudden, and no one could account for it.

But Blachford, whose nature, though by no means brave, was bloody and revengeful, and whose pride was stung to the quick by the spirited retort which Henry had cast in his teeth, had an underplot of his own, which, for good reasons, he withheld from his assessors, conscious that it would neither tally with the legal notions of the attorney, nor probably suit the more martial spirit of the Captain; nay, he had his doubts if even my Lord would be fond of giving countenance to it; for it was neither more nor less than to assassinate Henry, or, in the vulgar phrase, knock him down in the dark, and leave him to his chance for life or death when he had done with him.

Blachford in his chair of justice could expatiate, as we have seen, with all due solemnity upon the heinous crime of murder; but Blachford in his private character was the very man in the world to project the perpetration, though not just the person to undertake the hazard of executing such an act: He was provided with a confidential servant, whom Na-

ture seemed to have qualified for these purposes with the most absolute insensibility both of danger and humanity. This adroit personage, by name Lawrence O'Rourke, whose origin was to be sought in the west of Connaught, had been taken into Blachford's service, when he first commenced planter in Jamaica; and so faithfully had he ministered to the cruelties of his master, that it was generally thought most of the memorable acts were done by his hands, for which that gentleman became distinguished in those parts by the title of Bloody Bob Blachford.

The moon was at this time commodiously in her last quarter: Lord Crowbery had signified his intention of summoning Henry to the castle that evening, and it occurred to Blachford that the opportunity was favourable for way-laying him on his return through the grove, where Larry O'Rourke undertook to post himself, armed with a stout bludgeon, in the use and exercise of which he was very expert.

In the mean time Ezekiel and Goody May, having in their different quarters disseminated the story of Blachford's employing his attorney to eject them from their cottage, through the whole village, the indignation became general, and

and some of the younger people began to employ themselves in the making and erecting of a very stately gibbet in the centre of the Green, and in full view from the windows of his worship's mansion, for the purpose of executing that venerable magistrate by proxy on the spot. This proxy, which was a very reasonable likeness of its principal, was seated in a tumbril, with its arms tied behind it in a very orthodox manner, and seemed only to wait the prayers of some charitable person, before it received the word of command for being hoisted up to the place of its execution. In this awful interim it occurred to the ingenious projectors of this moral machinery, that if Doctor Daw could be prevailed upon to give it his passport to the other world, they might launch it off with becoming grace, and the spectators be edified by the catastrophe.

It was in the dusk of the evening, and Ezekiel had just knocked the ashes out of his last pipe, when the noise and hubbub on the Green called him forth. No sooner had the figure in the tumbril crossed his optic nerves in the obscurity of the twilight, than those afore said nerves suggested to his sensorium an idea, that the enraged mob were actually about to execute

a living man without judge or jury. Horror-struck at the sight, he rushed amongst them, vociferating by the way, "For the Lord's sake, neighbours! what are you about? Are you mad? Are you going to commit murder?"—"No, no," cried one of the throng, "we are only gibbetting the Squire for turning you and Goody May out of doors."—"Od's my life!" cried Ezekiel, coming nearer to the figure, and discovering something like a human face, with an enormous pair of black eyebrows, "I protest to truth it did deceive me: Never trust me if it is not a striking likeness of that unworthy person who has turned the widow from his door, and assailed the chastity of her daughter: would to Heaven the original were as harmless as the copy! Oh! thou monster of uncleanness" (for now the spirit had taken hold of him, and he had again forgot he was addressing himself to a dumb image) "Oh! thou idolatrous worshipper of filthy Be-lial! outcast from grace, and given up to work all manner of whoredoms and abominations in the land; justly art thou cut off in thy sins, thou he-goat of the flock of Beelzebub! Have you eyes, ye lookers-on, and can you see the fate of this unholy one without trembling? Have you ears, and can you hear me and not mark?

mark ? Hearts have you, ye obdurate sinners ! and will you not understand how terrible is the latter end of the wicked ? Let him that coveteth his neighbour's daughter take warning by this wretch's fate ! What is the lust of the eye ? a snare : What the evil motion of the heart ? a serpent in your bosom : What the war of the members provoking to uncleanness ? a ramping and a roaring lion. Maidens ! (if there be any here that answer to that name) remember that the chastity of a damsel is like the dew-drop on the flower ; the sun shineth wantonly upon it, and it is gone : Keep yourselves in the shade ; let your concealment be your safeguard, ye are then only secure when no one can approach you : Handle not the asp, for it will sting you ; put not your hand to the cockatrice's nest, for there is poison in the tooth of it, and it hath the bite of mortal death."

Whilst these words were upon his lips, Ezekiel, to his utter astonishment, beheld the figure slowly ascend out of the cart ; and by the operation of a rope and pulley (of neither of which, good man ! he had taken any account, being then warmly engaged with the cockatrice) mount into the air, suspended by the neck from the cross-bar of the gibbet. He cast

his eyes upwards with pity and amaze, and piously ejaculated, in the charity of his heart,—
“ The Lord have mercy upon thy soul ! ” —
“ Amen ! ” echoed John Jenkins, who performed the office of hangman, and at the same time run the vice-justice up by the pulley. John was the idlest fellow in the parish, and most in the ill graces of Doctor Daw, for the looseness of his morals.—“ Here he goes to the devil in a whiff,” quoth Jenkins.—“ Art thou so familiar with the devil,” said Ezekiel, “ as to know whom he will take, and whom he will spare ? Have a care of one, John Jenkins, and do not venture to pronounce upon thy neighbours.”—John was too busy to enter into argument, so Ezekiel had the last word, and turned aside towards the cottage.

The mob, under the conduct of General Jenkins, the hangman, marched in array to Dame May’s cottage, and having drawn up before the door, Jenkins being deputed as spokesman, announced himself, and was admitted.—
“ By your leave, Dame May,” quoth the orator, “ we mean you no offence ; but being, as you do see, your friends and neighbours, we come to cheer you a bit in your affliction, by telling you, for your comfort, we have gib-
betted

betted the Justice upon the Green; and if we had treated him as such a hard-hearted fellow deserves, we shou'd have pull'd his house stick and stone down to the ground; so there's the right o' the matter. As for thee, Henry, give me thy hand, my brave lad! I will stand by the man that will stand by a woman as long as I have life, dammee! I beg your pardon, Doctor, for swearing, but when a man's heart is right, lookye, what he says goes for nothing; as for a few hasty words, it is to be hop'd there'll be no account taken of them."

"I hope so too," quoth Ezekiel, in an undertone. Dame May returned her thanks; Henry shook the orator by the hand; and the mob, according to custom, adjourned to the alehouse.

CHAPTER X.

The trampled Worm will turn.

THE news of the gibbetting flew to Blackford's ears by one of the nimblest couriers Fame had in her service; it made him furious, and as he laid it all to Henry's account, it rendered

his eyes upwards with pity and amaze, and piously ejaculated, in the charity of his heart,—
“ The Lord have mercy upon thy soul ! ” —
“ Amen ! ” echoed John Jenkins, who performed the office of hangman, and at the same time run the vice-justice up by the pulley. John was the idlest fellow in the parish, and most in the ill graces of Doctor Daw, for the looseness of his morals.—“ Here he goes to the devil in a whiff,” quoth Jenkins.—“ Art thou so familiar with the devil,” said Ezekiel, “ as to know whom he will take, and whom he will spare ? Have a care of one, John Jenkins, and do not venture to pronounce upon thy neighbours.”—John was too busy to enter into argument, so Ezekiel had the last word, and turned aside towards the cottage.

The mob, under the conduct of General Jenkins, the hangman, marched in array to Dame May’s cottage, and having drawn up before the door, Jenkins being deputed as spokesman, announced himself, and was admitted.—
“ By your leave, Dame May,” quoth the orator, “ we mean you no offence ; but being, as you do see, your friends and neighbours, we come to cheer you a bit in your affliction, by telling you, for your comfort, we have gibbeted

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rendered him as hungry for his prey as a hyæna.

The haughty Peer now seated in his castle, and encompassed by his myrmidons, dispatched a servant with his summons for Henry to attend upon him: What particular purpose he meant to effect by this, does not clearly appear, but it is not unlikely Blachford was the mover of it, with the view of wreaking his vengeance upon the youth by the hands of O'Rourke, on his return from the conference.

The messenger being dispatched for Henry, order was given by the Peer, that his lady should come to him: Blachford and the attorney thereupon took the hint to retire, and her Ladyship, having obeyed the call, was welcomed in manner following—"So Madam, you are come; be pleas'd to take your seat, I have something to say to you. What are the motives, I would fain know, for your late visits to my apothecary in the village? I did not know you was out of health, or, if you are, methinks it is his duty to attend upon you."

"But he is confined to his chamber, my lord."

"So ought you to be, my lady, and so shall

shall you be, if you have no more regard for my honour and your own dignity, than to be seen gossiping and caballing in beggarly cottages, with vagabonds and strumpets, for purposes I blush to name.”—“ What strumpets and what vagabonds,” replied the lady, “ do you charge me of caballing with; and what purposes have I ever had in hand, which you, my lord, shou’d blush to name? Declare them.”

“ Declare to me first, if you can, who that young fellow is, you have been graciously pleas’d to furnish with cloathes and money, and pick up out of the dirt; a beggarly vagrant, for the worthy purpose, amongst others that shall be nameless, of insulting my friend Mr. Blachford in the most public and daring manner, for which he shall be made an example of my vengeance, be assur’d, though your folly, Lady Crowbery, (to say no worse of it) shou’d be expos’d thereby to all the world. Who is this fellow, I demand? What is his name? What is his business here? What are the mighty charms you can discover in the embraces of a beggar? what the sense of your own honour, that you shou’d fall into his arms, as these eyes have witness’d? And have you not
repeatedly

repeatedly done this? Can you deny the charge? and what excuse are you provided with to offer to a husband, who will not tamely suffer such unparallel'd disgrace?"

The vehemence, with which all this was uttered, the variety of questions it contained, her unwillingness to answer some, and her incapacity of accounting for others (for she was not yet informed of Blachford's late affair) so totally overpower'd the tender and maternal feelings of Lady Crowbery, that unable to collect her thoughts, she remained silent and without an answer.

After some little pause, regarding her with a look of anger and contempt, he exclaimed — "'Tis well, madam, 'tis very well! I take your silence for confession, and your tears for tokens of your shame. I now tell you that I have sent for your fellow hither; I wou'd fain see this favour'd rival, whom you have singled out to disgrace me. Was he worthy the resentment of a gentleman, I wou'd not part from him till the life of one of us was sacrific'd to honour; but being what he is, the lowest, basest, vilest of mankind, fitter chastisement shall be provided for him."

"Hold, my Lord!" she now exclaimed, re-
fuming

fuming on the sudden a composed and energetic tone of voice; "hold, my Lord Crowbery, nor drive me quite to desperation by your ferocious menaces and false unfounded glances at my reputation, which defies your charge. If you demand to know why I have reach'd out the hand of charity to this young man, whom you arraign so cruelly, it is because my heart hath feeling for the unfortunate, when undeservedly oppress'd, for the stranger and the friendless, for the benevolent, the brave, the generous preserver of another's life, for which he had nearly sacrificed his own—in one word for the relict of a dear departed friend, the last bequest of Ratcliffe, a foundling dropt at his door and adopted by his charity. You have sent for him, you say; you will then see him, hear him, question him, and if you have a heart, approve, admire."—"This to my face!" he cried in a transport of rage; "this to my face! By Heaven I'll not endure it, I'll not live with you, I'll not cohabit with a woman as my wife, who dares to uphold and praise her paramour to my very face."

"My paramour do you call him? Alas! how widely do you mistake!"—Here she dropped her voice, and accompanied these few

few words with an action and motion of the head so mournful, as seemed to strengthen his suspicions rather than allay them, for he now grew louder in reproach, and with an oath denounced determined separation.

“Be it so,” she replied; “acquitted by my own conscience, I shall patiently submit to what you threaten, and will appeal to time and Heaven’s good pleasure for the rest: only this I tell you, and accept it from me as a salutary caution, beware how you insult too far a brave, though temperate, spirit.”

This said, a servant announced the arrival of our hero.—“Already!” cried my Lord, in a tone of surprize: What struck upon his mind at that particular moment to discompose him, is more than we pretend to account for; discompos’d he certainly was, ’till recollecting that some order must be given to the servant, who was attending for that purpose, he cried out—“Let the fellow wait.”—After a pause, turning a severe look upon his lady, he said,—“I shall exact from you, madam, your most solemn promise never to see or communicate with this fellow more.”—“I have told you,” she replied, “who and what this fellow as you call him is, and I should be a hypocrite

to

to say I will not fulfil a trust of the most sacred sort that friendship can bequeath: but why need you exact, or I make any promises, when you are determined on a separation, that will release me from your authority, and leave me to account to conscience only for the rectitude of my conduct?"—"But you are not yet in that happy state of freedom," he cried, "and I will be obeyed!"—To this no answer was returned.

He started hastily from his seat, walked a turn or two up and down the room, and then in a full tone said, "Perhaps you expect to see your favourite triumph in his insolence; you'll be mistaken: Please to leave the room."—"Willingly," she replied, "and from this moment I regard it as my dismissal." Her firmness staggered him; he would have called her back, but pride withheld him: Suspicious that his lady in her present temper might in defiance of his orders attempt an interview with the youth in waiting, he rung the bell with vehemence, and called for his attendance on the instant.

Henry made his entrance, bowing respectfully to the Peer, who seated with all due state, from which he did not in the slightest degree relax,

relax, eyed him over from heel to head with that haughty air of contempt, which is now so rarely seen, except in our tyrants on the stage.

A string of interrogatories, somewhat in the inquisitorial stile, were the first salutations Henry received from the noble personage; his answers to these, though not always satisfactory to the point of information, were respectfully and modestly conveyed.—“I find,” resumed his Lordship, “you are here without occupation or employ, idling about my parish, consorting with a young woman, the daughter of one of the cottagers, caballing with the rabble of the village, and stirring them up to very infamous attacks upon a respectable magistrate, my friend and neighbour; and therefore I wou’d have you know, that I shall consider you as a person of a very suspicious character, and pass you off as a vagrant, unless you instantly decamp.”

“My lord,” replied the youth, “if I offend against the laws of my country, by being poor and without employ, I must patiently submit to all the consequences I may incur by your enforcing them against me; but if I have committed no offence, have behav’d myself peaceably,

ably, and in one instance, suffer me to say, profitably to an individual of your lordship's parish, I am at a loss to think how I can be represented to you as a dangerous and suspected character; nevertheless, if my abiding any longer on your lordship's soil may give you offence, I shall not oppose myself to your displeasure, but depart."

"Do so then without delay," said the Peer, "and begone; but first tell me what charities you have receiv'd from my wife, for what services, and to what amount."—"My lord, I have done no services to Lady Crowbery, nor am at liberty to answer to the other points, on which you question me."

"What, Sir! do you receive money from my wife, and refuse to satisfy me, when I demand how much?"

"I am very sorry to be obliged to decline any thing your lordship wishes to be informed of from me, but in this instance I must desire to be excused."

"You have been cautioned, I perceive; but do you affect honour?"

"That requires no answer, my lord."

"Why in truth the question is rather superfluous."

"I treat

“ I treat it as such, for honour is as inherent in my person as it is hereditary in your lordship’s : I do not therefore take your lordship’s words as conveying any doubt of my preserving that part at least of my natural character, which misfortune cannot rob me of, and which, permit me to add, does not suffer me to put up with a determin’d insult from any man.”

“ Upon my word, Sir !” replied Lord Crowbery, somewhat relaxing from the stateliness of his manner, and the acrimony of his tone, “ you talk a high language considering what you are ; and I believe it was somewhat in this stile that you deported yourself with Mr. Blachford.” — “ Pardon me, my lord, it was in a very different manner I found myself compelled to address Mr. Blachford : he had defamed the character of a young woman, whom he took the basest means to seduce, and as he had falsely charg’d me with the very crime he himself had attempted to commit, I simply told him, that his attack on Susan May was infamous, and his report of me an impudent and abominable lie. That gentleman, I dare say, very distinctly heard the words ; if not, I am very ready to repeat them.”

“ Not in my hearing ; I desire no such familiarity ;

miliarity ; nor do I wish to be made a party in Mr. Blachford's quarrels."

" Your lordship will be pleased to recollect that you stated my behaviour to that gentleman as matter of charge : in my own vindication therefore I was led to tell you of what sort his behaviour was to me ; and in accounting for my words found it necessary to explain the causes that provok'd them. I trust your lordship thinks I have not failed in my respect to you by answering in my own defence."

" You have no right over my thoughts ; them I shall keep to myself : there are deeper thoughts in my mind than I shall see fit at present to produce."

" Then, my lord, I am to presume you never will produce them, against me at least ; for I am here present on your own summons, standing before you like a culprit at the bar, to hear and to answer every thing you can urge against me ; I therefore humbly beg leave to know from yourself whether I am clear of all you have to charge me with."—" I have nothing more to say to you, Sir," replied my Lord ; " you may retire when you please."—" I understand you, my lord," cried Henry ; " you have restored to me my character, and
I will

I will take care so to guard it that no man shall traduce it with impunity."

CHAPTER XI.

A Blow well placed in the Dark, or, in other Words, according to the Greek Proverb, Blackford shears a Lion.

AS Henry passed through the hall, after his conference related in the foregoing chapter, he was met by Lady Crowbery, who hastily put a paquet into his hand, conjuring him to take care of it, and keep secret the contents.—“ In that paper,” she said, “ you will see the mystery of your birth reveal’d : Betake yourself to my uncle Manstock without delay, and Heaven in its mercy protect and guard you !”

Henry, almost overpowered with joyful surprise, at hearing what that paper was to disclose, took it with all the rapture and devotion, which its interesting contents excited, and carefully secured it in his pocket. He had yet sufficient recollection left to seize the opportunity for returning the ring to Lady Crowbery wrapped up in paper and tied ; at the same
time

time he briefly recited what had been said to him by the man who found it: Lady Crowsberry seemed a good deal surprized, and denied having missed any one of her rings, however as the time was pressing, and the danger of being discovered instant, she took it from him, and again bidding him tenderly farewell, hastened away.

There were two roads to the village; the shortest by a foot-path through the plantation, which was close and now dark, the other was the common coach-road through the park, open and secure from ambuscade. As Henry came out from the hall-door, he found old Weevil the miller waiting in the court-yard: he had been to the house with flour, and had been chatting as usual with the servants; he understood from them, that Henry was under examination with my lord, and having noticed O'Rourke prowling about the plantations with his bludgeon in his hand, entertained some suspicions of a plot upon Henry, and was determined to accompany him home, and persuaded him to take the open road through the park.

This was a task of some difficulty on the part of the friendly miller, for Henry's eager-

ness to open the important paquet made him very adverse to any propofal that prolonged the time; the point, however, was carried, and he, accompanied by Weevil, arrived safe at the widow's, whilst Larry O'Rourke laid close in his ambush at the bottom of the grove, where was a little foot-bridge that led over a narrow stream thickly shaded with alders.

When a much longer period of time had elapsed than would have served to carry Henry through the grove, Blachford, who calculated minutes, with some anxiety, set out from the Viscount's upon the scout, and took his way secretly and solitarily down the plantation walk: as he approached the spot where the attack was to be made, he stopt and listened; all was silence: he took counsel with his own thoughts, and concluding the business was done, advanced, nothing doubting, till he had one foot upon the bridge, when, as if fortune had in that instant recovered her eye-sight and bestowed the bludgeon with strict retaliation upon its proper owner, Larry O'Rourke, supposing he had now made sure of his victim, took aim with such success, and dealt his blow with so hearty a good-will upon the pericranium
of

of the magistrate, that Blachford, having uttered one horrid yell as his heels flew from under him, instantly paid his compliments to the muddy naiads of the brook.

The George and Dragon alehouse, where the party was carousing, who had performed the ceremony of the gibbet, was so near to the scene of action, that Blachford's yell was most distinctly heard by the persons there assembled, who immediately turned out upon the alarm. Amongst the first of these was John Jenkins the hangman, who found Larry O'Rourke employed in dragging the justice out of the water, for he had now, though somewhat of the latest, discovered a small mistake as to heads, but in point of execution no fault could be found with his work, which seemed to be effectually done, as the blow had taken place just above the temple, and the bludgeon was loaded with lead. John Jenkins being somewhat more than elevated with his evening's festivity, was for leaving the justice to his fate, making use of the trite proverb, that the man who was born to be hanged, was in no danger of being drowned; but the soberer part of the company, who

F 2

saw

saw further into the case than John did, lent their hands to the work, and assisted in dragging Blachford out of the brook, who during the whole operation observed a perfect silence, which we are far from imputing to any fullness on the part of that gentleman, he being at that time from home upon a temporary trip to the regions of insensibility.

One of the company had been dispatched for a candle and lantern, and by the light of this the body of Justice Blachford, stretched upon the ground and motionless, exhibited a most ghastly spectacle; his temple streaming with blood, his eyes fixed, and no symptom of life appearing. Upon the sight of this, Larry O'Rourke set up a most dolorous howl in the true Connaught key and cadence, crying out—"Ullaloo! Master, why wou'd you die? Had'nt you horses and cows and cattle in abundance, with plenty of strong drink in your vaults, and store of money in your lockers, and why wou'd you leave poor Larry to lament and cry over you at such a rate, when you might have been easy and quiet at home, and no harm done? Ah! was'nt it a foul step of your's to thrust your head in the
way

way of my cudgel, when you knew well enough, aye and wou'd witness it too, if the grace of God was'nt just now out of your memory, that if every one had his own, that big knock on the head you have got is another man's property, only he chanc'd to be out of the way when I gave it to him."

"Seize the murderer," cried one of the troop, upon which John Jenkins and the rest laid hold of him.—"What is it you are upon, ye pagans," exclaimed Larry, "to be seizing me? Let the dead man speak for himself, and mark if he don't tell you another story about the matter, whereby it was no murder, only a small mistake, and if that's a hanging matter, woe betide my countrymen! Ask him now, ye sparrow-hawks, if it was'nt at his own desire that I kill'd him, and how shou'd I know one man from another in the dark, when I cou'd see neither?"

Somebody now cried out to hold him fast, for it was confessedly a plot between matter and man to have assassinated Henry.—"To be sure it was," said O'Rourke; "Do you think I'm such a graceless teif as to kill my own master? Huh! you are a cunning one, are you not, to find out that?"

Three or four of them now began to hale the Irishman away with them, whilst others fetched a blanket from the alehouse, on which they laid the body of Blachford, and in this manner carried him to his own house.

END OF BOOK THE FOURTH.

BOOK

BOOK THE FIFTH.

CHAPTER I.

A short Treatise upon Love, ancient and modern.

LOVE, as a deity, was invested, by those who made him such, with the most contradictory attributes: they feigned him blind, yet called him an unerring marksman; gave him wings, yet allowed that constancy was his best qualification; described him as an infant, yet were not to learn that infancy alone is exempted from his power.

These are contrarieties, which none but the initiated can reconcile. They justify his blindness, when hurried on by the impetuosity of passion they espy no danger in the precipice before them; they acknowledge he is swift of wing, when the minutes they devote to his enjoyments fly so quickly, and they cannot but regard him as an infant, when one short honeymoon begins and terminates his date of life.

A thousand ingenious devices have been formed to suit the various properties of this fa-

bulous divinity, and every symbol has it's moral; he has been allegorized and enigmatized in innumerable ways; the pen, the pencil and the chissel have been worn out in his service; floods of ink, looms of canvass, and quarries of marble, have been exhausted in the boundless field of figurative description. The lover, who finds out so many ways of torturing himself, cannot fail to strike out symbols and devices to express the passion under which he suffers; then the verse flows mournfully elegiac, and the bleeding heart, transfix'd with an arrow, is emblematically displayed; thus, whilst the poet varies his measure, the painter and the sculptor vary their devices, as joy or sorrow, success or disappointment, influence their fancy. One man's Cupid is set astride upon a lion, to exemplify his power; another places his upon a crocodile, to satyrize his hypocrisy; here the god is made to trample upon kingly crowns, there to trifle with a wanton sparrow; the adamantine rock now crumbles at his stroke, anon we see him basking on the bosom of Chloe, his arrows broken and his pinions bound.

The Greeks, who had more caprice in their passions than either nature or morality can excuse, nevertheless bequeathed their *Cupid* to posterity

posterity with a considerable stock in hand ; but the moderns added more from funds of their own, and every thing they bestowed was honestly appropriated to the only sex that has any claim upon the regular and solid firme of *Venus, Cupid, and Co.*

When superstition met its final overthrow, and the heathen temples were dismantled of their images and altars, Love alone, the youngest of the deities, survived the disaster, and still holds his dignities and prerogatives by christian courtesy ; and though modern ingenuity has not added much to his embellishments, yet, in the ardour and sincerity of our devotion, we do not yield to the antients : the whole region of romance has been made over to him ; our drama, tragic as well as comic, has gone far beyond that of the antients in building its fable and character upon the passion of love. Last in point of time, but not of allegiance, comes the fraternity of novelists, who are his clients to a man ; Love is the essence of every tale, and so studious are our authors not to let the spirit of that essence become vapid, that few, if any, fail to conclude with the event of marriage : connubial love is of a quality too tame for their purpose.

As the majority of our novels are formed upon domestic plots, and most of these drawn from the very times in which they are written, the living manners must be characterised by the authors of such fables, and we must of course make our Love of such materials as the fashion of the age affords: it will not therefore resemble the high-flown passion of the Gothic knights and heroes of the old romance, neither will it partake of those coarse manners and expressions, which our old comic writers adopt; it will even take a different shade from what a novelist would have given it half a century ago, for the social commerce of the sexes is now so very different from what it was then, that beauty is no longer worshipped with that distant respect, which our antiquated beaux paid to their mistresses.

As the modern fine gentleman studies nothing but his ease, and aims only to be what he terms *comfortable*, regarding all those things, that used to be considered as annoyances and embarrassments, with cool indifference and contempt, even Love in him is not an active passion; he expresses no raptures at the sight of beauty, and if he is haply provoked to some slight exertion out of course, it must be some
new

new face just launched upon the public, that can fan his languid spirit into any emotion approaching towards curiosity. Nothing is an object of admiration with him; he covets no gratifications that are to be earned by labour, no favours that are to be extorted by assiduity; his pleasures must court him, and the fair one he affects must forget that she is a divinity, and banish from her thoughts the accustomed homage of sighs and tears and bending knees, for all these things give trouble to the performer, and on that account are by general consent exploded and abolished.

Now the writer of novels has not the privilege, which the painter of portraits has, of dressing modern characters in antique habits; so that some of our best productions in this class are already become, in some particulars, out of fashion; even the inimitable composition of *The Foundling* is fading away in some of its tints, though the hand of the master as a correct delineator of nature will be traced to all posterity, and hold its rank amongst the foremost of that class, which enrolls the names of Cervantes, Rabelais, Le Sage, Voltaire, Rousseau, Richardson, Smollet, Johnson, Sterne, and some others, whose pens death

hath not yet stopt, and long may it be ere he does !

Having now allowed the historic muse her customary bait, we shall soon urge her to fresh exertions, by which a certain young lady, who as yet has barely stept upon the stage, will begin to support a more important interest in the business of this drama. Isabella Manstock, in the bloom of youth and beauty, cannot long remain an idle character; though she has flattered herself that filial affection will keep possession of her heart, to the exclusion of that intruding passion we have been speaking of, yet nature and experience will compel me to exhibit that lovely recusant as one amongst many, who have been fain to truckle to the tyrant they abjure : the time is drawing near, when impressions, which she never felt before, will force their way ; when the merits, the misfortunes, the attentions of our hero, will take hold upon her heart ; when her eye will dwell upon his person with delight, her ear listen to his praises with rapture, to his sighs with pity, to his suit with favour : then if Love, who is not to be affronted with impunity, gives a loose to his revenge, and makes her feel the full terrors of his power, the reader will be pleased to bear
in

in mind, that I have not taken my lovers from the inanimate groups that form the circle of fashion, but sought them in the sequestered walks of rural life, where the senses are not deadened by variety, nor indifference become habitual by the affectation of it.

CHAPTER II.

A Letter spares a Blush.

WHEN Henry entered the cottage, and found it cleared of its inhabitants, who had joined the crowd that was collected about the wounded body of the justice, his heart palpitated with eager, yet anxious, curiosity, as he unfolded the interesting packet which Lady Crowbery had given him, and therein read as follows :

“ Nature forces from me the important se-
“ cret ; my heart can no longer suppress its
“ struggles : I am your mother. A victim
“ to love, before reason or experience had
“ armed me against that dangerous passion, I
“ yielded to a fatal proposal of escaping with
“ my lover to Scotland from my father, who
“ inexorably opposed our marriage. Made
“ desperate by that cruel interdiction, we set
“ out

“ out upon our rash adventure; were closely
“ pursued, and, in the last stage of our journey, overtaken. When we found ourselves
“ cut off from any further progress, despair
“ seized us, but it was the despair of lovers,
“ resolute to sacrifice every thing rather than
“ their fidelity and plighted faith.

“ In this forlorn and hopeless moment,
“ love, importunity, the interchange of mutual vows and promises, and, above all, the
“ visionary hope that so we might compel
“ my father to unite us, tempted us to seal our
“ contract without the ceremony that was
“ needful to confirm and sanctify it.

“ I own the rashness of the deed, nor aim to
“ palliate its culpability; I prostrated myself
“ at my father's feet, confessed my weakness,
“ implored his pity and forgiveness, and, in
“ an agony of grief, besought him to consent
“ to join our hands, and save me from the
“ shame and misery that would else befall me.
“ 'Twas in vain; we were torn asunder; a
“ noble youth, unexceptionable in birth and
“ character, the younger son of the Lord
“ Pendennis, was discarded; he went upon his
“ adventures to India; I remained disconsolate, and in ignorance of his fate, till in the
“ course

" course of time I was, in secrecy, delivered
" of a son.

" That son you are : Henry Delapoer, if
" he lives, is your father.

" For the love of heaven keep this secret
" buried from the world, till—but I can no
" more; the meltings of a mother's heart for-
" bid the rest."

The mystery thus revealed, Henry awhile stood fixt in dumb surprize; the first emotions of his heart burst into unpremeditated prayer and pious thanks to God. Clasping the paper in his hands, with bended knees and eyes uplifted, in the fervour of his soul, he broke forth—" I thank thee, Father of all mercies, that thou hast now vouchsafed to take thy humble creature out of darkness into light, conducting me through various chances by thy all-gracious providence, and giving me at length to know what nature languished for in vain, the mystery of my birth. And, O my God, though I were born in guilt, yet sanctify me; though the child of disobedience, with my whole heart I'll serve thee; so shall I gain in heaven what I have forfeited on earth, a name and an inheritance."

CHAPTER III.

Some Folks are no nice Discerners of Times and Seasons.

A Few minutes only had passed, whilst Henry was endeavouring to compose his agitated spirits, when behold! Ezekiel, followed by the women, returned to the cottage, full fraught with texts of holy writ applicable to the scene he had been present at, and which he was so impatient to discharge, that how to find room for them all, and what order to bring them out in, seemed to be the only thing that puzzled him; and though the hour was drawing towards bed-time, preach he must, and Henry must hear him, though any other person but Ezekiel could not have failed to notice the distraction of his thoughts; but times and seasons never were a part of that good man's studies, neither was he one who thought there could be too much of a good thing; and the best of all possible things, in his opinion, was his own preaching.

“*The wicked is trapped in his own snare,*” quoth Ezekiel; “this is one of the proverbs of Solomon, and Solomon, my children, was
a wise

a wise man, the wisest man in all the world, every school-boy can tell you that: he was king of Israel; it is not all kings are as wise as Solomon; put down all they ever said in a book of proverbs, and one chapter, nay one single sentence of his shall be worth them all; and he spake three thousand proverbs, his songs were a thousand and five; he could entertain the Queen of Sheba with something worth her notice, when she came to prove him with hard questions; I cannot tell you where Sheba was, I wish I could, but I know it was somewhere in the south, and that she travell'd out of a far country to hear his wisdom; now you can hear it and not move out of your chairs, and yet you cry out 'tis bed-time, *yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.* A terrible judgment hath lighted on this wicked Blachford, the cry of the widow is gone up against him, the persecutor of the innocent man hath fallen by the hand of his own accomplice: *If they say, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause, behold they lay wait for their own blood, they lurk privily for their own lives."*

Scarce had Ezekiel brought this sentence to
a close,

a close, when the unexpected appearance of Doctor Zachary Cawdle cut him short.—

“May I believe my eyes?” exclaimed Henry.

—“Here I am sure enough,” replied Zachary,

“and no ghost, rather too fat for that still, though a good span in the girdle less than I was; but *venienti occurrere morbo* is my maxim, you understand me, brother Daw: If I had not played the doctor with the devil, he wou’d have played the devil with the doctor, I can tell you; but I have parried him for this turn.”—

Ezekiel groaned.—“Here’s been fine doings amongst you; there’s one head in the parish, that I wou’d not have on my shoulders for all the money that belongs to it. Zooks and blood! my old Sawney wou’d have made a posset of the Justice’s brains, had’nt I slept in at the nick.”—“Is the wound dangerous,”

quoth Ezekiel, after another groan.—“Dangerous!” replied Zachary, “*’tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as a church-door, but it will do: many an honest man has walk’d out of the world, and not so good an apology for taking leave of it as Master Blachford has, believe me, brother Doctor. My Sawney prognosticated he would do well, because forsooth he slept so quietly; blockhead, quoth I, the somnolency augurs injury to the brain by frac-*

ture,

ture, or concussion, or depression of the scull ; and sure enough I found it so, a damnable squab upon the occiput ; Good night to you, thought I, your nap will be a long one.”— (“ Alas, alas !” murmur’d Ezekiel) “ I believe, brother surgeon, we must apply the trepan, we must break a way into his small cargo of brains.”—“ Mercy upon me,” quoth Ezekiel, “ the man will die.”—“ Most men will do that,” said Zachary, “ and he perhaps as soon as most.”—“ But he’s not fit to die,” reiterated the preacher.—“ I’ve long thought,” rejoined the doctor, “ he was not fit to live.”—“ Is he in his senses,” Ezekiel ask’d—“ If he is,” quoth Zachary, “ he keeps them to himself.”—“ How then shall he be warned of his approaching end ?”—“ Methinks he is pretty well warn’d of that,” replied the doctor ; “ if you had such a crack on your skull, you wou’d find one warning full sufficient.”—“ But I mean,” cried Ezekiel, exalting his voice and rearing himself up into the perpendicular, “ who is to awaken him to a recollection of his sinful life, to call him to repentance, and prepare his poor departing soul for eternity ?”—“ That’s another matter,” replied the man of medicine, “ that’s a business out of my way altogether.”—Yet
give

give me leave to say," resumed the preacher; " 'tis a business that imports him highly, 'tis that which he, and you and I, and every mortal breathing must take seriously in hand: he is the artist that can heal those wounds, he the best friend that can assuage those pangs, and find a balm to allay the rage of a tormented conscience."

This was one of the last subjects Zachary wished to talk upon, yet so it happened, that Ezekiel seldom failed to start it in his company; to turn it off therefore for the present, Zachary observed, that death to be sure was a serious thing to every man, but that was no reason we should be always talking about it; 'twou'd come soon enough of its own accord: " For my part," continued he, " I hold it good to keep up the spirits of my patients, and do my best to drive such gloomy thoughts away from them; whereas, whenever one of your sort comes about them preaching and praying, I constantly observe they sink and pine away, the pulse grows low and feeble; tremors seize them, and symptoms, which before were only menacing, thenceforward become mortal: therefore do you see, friend Daw, you and I directly counteract each other,
for

for whilst I am bracing you are relaxing, and I wou'd as soon administer cathartics to my patient in a putrid case, as bring you to his bedside to sound the death-watch in his ear. Leave the justice then to me, I beseech you, and when I have mended his head, if ever that shall be, it will be time enough and task enough for you to mend his heart."

Zachary concluded in time, for Ezekiel's tongue wou'd not have been restricted to silence any longer; as there was something in this harangue which touched him in the tenderest part, and as the good man was always ready armed for religious controversy, he was just stepping into the lists, when he saw the person of the doctor vanish at the door with hat and cane in hand, not waiting for a rejoinder, which was likely to be so little to his taste.

"Aha!" cried Ezekiel, "let him go for an obstinate despiser of things sacred. Is that man, who carries a tub full of mortality before him, a proper champion to set death and repentance at defiance? But mark the valour of this boastful challenger; he throws down his gage, and then runs away from the combat. Oh! if he had but stay'd to hear me, I
wou'd

wou'd have made his ears tingle with my answer; like a two-edged sword, the word of truth shou'd have pierc'd that belly-full of wickedness to the dividing of the marrow; I wou'd have told him."—Here Ezekiel recollected so many things that he would have told, and new matter flowed in so fast whilst he was working out the old, that if Henry's patience could have reached the length of Ezekiel's sermon, the best example of this virtue would not have been that of holy Job.

All things, however, come to an end, and even Ezekiel's preaching did not last for ever, so that our hero was at length left to his repose, or I should rather have said to those interesting meditations, which occupied his mind too fully to admit of sleep. The important paquet was again resorted to; the discovery therein contained, gave him a name and station in society; new duties, new sensations now commenced; now he discerned the pure maternal source, from whence those tender transports were derived, that had occasioned his alarm, and roused the jealous rage of Lord Crowbery; but he saw with infinite regret, that circumstances, justified by nature, never could

could be explained, and how to rescue his unhappy parent from her danger he knew not: ardently he longed to throw himself at her feet and receive her blessing, but all approaches were barred against him; no choice was left but to resort for protection to the hospitable house of Sir Roger Manstock, and he now regarded him not only as the friend of Ratcliffe, but as the uncle of his mother; a consideration that greatly relieved him from many of his scruples; a sum in bank notes, which was inclosed within the cover of his mother's letter, very amply furnished him with an independence as to money matters, a favor of all others the most painful to solicit from any benefactor but a parent. He resolved therefore to set out for Manstock-house with the return of morning, and it is no improbable conjecture, that in forming this resolution, ideas of a certain sort, not absolutely devoid of hope, nor far removed from the first dawning of a tender passion, had a share in his decisions; certain it is, that he had little courage for the undertaking in his former humble obscurity, though the invitation had been held out to him by the worthy Baronet in the most gracious manner.

At

At length the morning dawned, when the sound of voices under his window occasioned him to open the casement and enquire into the cause of it. Two or three peasants, who had taken the body of Larry O'Rourke in charge, had missed their prisoner, and were reproaching each other with what seemed to have been the joint neglect of all, for they had contented themselves with shutting him into an upper chamber in the alehouse, whilst they regaled themselves in the kitchen: the points they had now in debate were, first, how it was possible for him to escape; next, whose fault it was that he did escape; and lastly, whether it was worth their while to pursue him; this however was soon decided in the negative, as one of the company assured them that the law would give them no reward for apprehending him, and all parties instantly agreed that there was nothing to be got by running after him. In this conclusion all were of a mind, and the business ended in their separating on the spot, and severally returning quietly to their own homes.

CHAPTER IV.

A new Scene opens upon our Hero.

WITH the break of day Henry left his pallet, and Susan at the same time shook off the soft bands of sleep, and presented to the eyes of morning a figure worthy to enlist amongst the Hours, that dance before the chariot of Apollo. When she had packed up her wardrobe, and arrayed her person in the simple dress of snow-white callico, she was prepared to obey the promised summons from her young mistress at Manstock-house.

Our hero in the mean time had accoutred himself to the best advantage: though the effects of a sleepless night were discoverable in his eyes and complexion, his model was such as academies might rejoice in, and theatres applaud; the child of love, offspring of parents in the prime of youth and bloom of beauty, he inherited all his mother's sweetness, and his father's fire; whilst nature and education had united to repay him for those penalties, which the law had laid upon his birth.

The old Dame and Ezekiel had not yet made their appearance. Susan entered the

room, where he was sitting wrapt in meditation; her eyes met his, she sighed, blushed, and retired: nothing was said, and we do not presume to dive into the thoughts and emotions of the heart.

After a few minutes Ezekiel Daw descended from his loft; his air and step had more than usual solemnity, and his countenance was expressive of a tender melancholy; his voice, naturally sharp and acrimonious, was now pitched in its softest and lowest key, when he addressed himself to our hero in the following terms:

“ I perceive, my beloved child, thou art about to depart from us. I have remember’d thee in my morning exercises, and put up my petitions to the throne of grace for blessing and protection to thee in thy future pilgrimage through this world of woe. Verily, my good child, I do love thee as a father loveth his own son; and if it were thy destiny, amidst the gross temptations of a sinful age, to fall from virtue, and a state of grace, I wou’d ask of Heaven to smite me now with death, rather than let me live to know and to lament thy soul’s sad forfeiture of happiness to come. But I will hope thou art not in the way of
such

such perdition; Heaven forbid! And now I pray thee, hearken to me awhile: I have liv'd longer in the world, and know it better, than thou possibly canst, who hast such short experience of it: mark me therefore! Thou art adventuring forth upon the word of promise given to thee by the Lady Crowbery; 'tis well! I do agnize good dispositions in the Lady Crowbery, she is a bounteous lady, but she is a woman; and of that sex I draw my caution from the book of books, yea verily I take them on the word of the wisest of men, for what he found them to be to his cost: Yes, grace of God! young man, I studied them betimes; *never took fire into my bosom*, as the preacher hath it; *never lusted after her beauty, neither let her take me with her eyelids*; therefore thou seest I have good right to say I know them well; and though I shou'd be loth to misinterpret the fair-seeming acts of any one, yet seeing thou art comely in thine outward man, and goodly to look at, being withal in that prurient state of early youth, which is most apt to lure the wandering eyes of woman, I warn thee not to run into a snare. What art thou to the Lady Crowbery?—a stranger; wert thou her son, cou'd she do more? Great fa-

vours granted without cause to comely men, and outward decking of the person, as thine now is, my child, rather betokens love, and amorous desire, than true and perfect charity: The Lady Crowbery, I say, is but a woman."

"I grant you," replied Henry, "she is a woman, but such an one as never must be mentioned in my hearing but with reverence."—"Enough said!" cried Ezekiel, "enough said, young man, I have done! Take your own course; good luck go with you! proffer'd advice, they say, has a bad favour with it: there is a certain animal, (I name no names) which, if you throw a pearl to him, will turn and rend you. I'll not strive to make a cap of grey hairs for a green head. You are wise, I warrant me; you are all-sufficient; I am an ape, an ass, a ninny; I have not studied women, I know nothing of their tricks, their whims, their fancies, not I. Well, well, I've done, I say I've done; and so good bye to you."

This said, he turned away; when Henry, catching hold of the skirt of his coat, cried out, "Stop, my good friend, let us not part in anger."—"Let go!" replied Ezekiel, "beware you rend not my vesture; what wou'dest thou, intemperate boy?"—"I wou'd not hurt you
for

for the world.”—“ Then loose your hold upon my vesture.”—“ I wou’d not, by the soul of me, I wou’d not anger you.”—“ Anger me !” cried the preacher, “ when did’st thou see me angry ? when did I ever yield to wrath, or vent one hasty word ? Never ; I know myself too well : thou dost mistake, rash youth, to call me angry ; ’tis thou thyself that art in wrath ; I’m calm as water.”

“ If I am angry, then, forgive me,” said Henry ; “ if I am a rash youth, pity me, for, by my soul”—“ No more of that,” interposed the preacher, “ thou hast us’d that strong asseveration twice, thou hast twice pledg’d that sacred part of thee already in a slight trivial matter ; perhaps I can believe thee, though thou dost not stake thy immortality upon the assertion.”—“ Without a pledge, then,” rejoined the youth, “ I tell you, in plain honesty and truth, that your advice, however well-intentioned, and, in other cases, good, in this of Lady Crowbery is misapplied ; and, did you know with what my heart is charg’d, you wou’d not wonder at this start of passion and impatience : bear with me then, and do not doubt but I know how to value both your counsel and your friendship.”

“ Well, well, well !” replied the worthy creature, “ here is my hand ; you see your fault, and there’s an end of it ; but never think that I can be surpris’d by the unruly passion of anger : No, no, thank Heaven, no man can ever throw that stone at me. And now, my dear child, as I am a sinner, I cou’d almost think that thou hadst drugg’d me with some potion, so much I love thee ; and when thou dost leave me, Henry, ’twill almost break my heart ; but what of that ? Fortune calls thee hence ; go, never think of me ; for by my soul I swear”—Here a smile on Henry’s countenance brought the good man to sudden recollection—“ What was I about to say ?” he cried ; “ Oh ! this it was : my soul is in that state of readiness for misfortune, pain, adversity, nay, death itself, that, as to any thing that can befall myself, I am perfectly indifferent ; but I shou’d indeed be wretched, my dear child, if any evil chance betided thee.”

Here the conversation ended with a very affectionate reply from Henry, in return for this kind speech ; and, not long after, a servant arrived from Sir Roger Manstock’s, in a one-horse chair, for the conveyance of Susan and the baggage, and at the same time a groom with a led horse for Henry.

After

After a ride of about twelve miles through a fertile and pleasant country, our hero came in sight of Manstock-house, the ancient seat of that respectable family, which through many generations had preserved it in it's original character without alteration or derangement; the same venerable avenues, the same walled gardens and formal parterres, held their stations around it; it's turrets were untouched, it's windows had not felt the hand of modern art, and the parish church still kept it's post of a close and faithful centinel over the morals of the family. The village spread itself to the north and west, and in the opposite quarter an inlet of the sea, at about a mile's distance, bounded a park well furnished with groupés of stately timber-trees; the fields and pastures about the village shewed themselves in a state of high cultivation, whilst several farm-houses in detached situations added greatly to the life and beauty of the landscape.

Henry had stopt upon the height to contemplate this animated prospect, and whilst he was thus employed, the venerable Baronet and his fair daughter joined him on horseback. Sir Roger was not a man of many words, neither did he excel in the modern fashion of address,

but he had a stile of welcoming his guests, that expressed his own sincerity, and put them effectually at their ease: his reception of our young adventurer was peculiarly cordial; it told him in few words that the heart of the owner was like the house, open, large, hospitable, and old-fashioned. Susan was sent home in the chair by the shortest road, whilst Henry, at his own request, was permitted to accompany the party on horseback in their circuit through the grounds, which, after a very pleasant tour, brought them to the village: here they stopt at a neat little mansion, which seemed newly repaired, and had a piece of ground at the back of it laid out as a garden, and well cropt with useful vegetables.

“ This little tenement,” said Sir Roger, “ belongs to Isabella, and she is mistress of the works here carrying on; therefore I believe we must pay our court to her by dismounting from our horses, and taking a view of her performances.”—Upon the word, Henry leapt from the saddle, and presented himself at the lady’s stirrup, who accepted of his assistance.—“ I propose,” said she, “ with my father’s leave, to put Susan’s mother into this cottage: what is your opinion of it? Perhaps she will
not

not find herself so comfortable here as in that she is accustom'd to, but I flatter myself she will be more mercifully treated."—" 'Tis a little paradise," cried Henry, as he looked about him; "and, if I could contemplate her happiness with envy, it would be for living in such a place, and under such a patroness."

It was truly a most enviable little mansion, in which the generous care of the fair owner had provided against every want, that its destined inhabitants could be supposed to have: upon the ground-floor, besides a kitchen stocked with every necessary, there was a sitting-room neatly papered, and beyond that a small office fitted up with shelves, which, Isabella observed, would serve the good dame as her shop of medicines. Over the chimney in the sitting-room Isabella had hung a print, which not only bore the name, but also a very strong likeness, of her father. When Henry had contemplated this print for some moments, he turned his eyes upon Isabella, as if he was searching for a resemblance in her features: some tender sentiment at that moment had called the tears into her eyes; Henry caught it by the swiftest glance that delicacy permitted: him to indulge—swift as it was, it offered up

her whole heart to his view, where filial affection, amidst a thousand tender sensibilities, held pre-eminence; the sympathetic impulse was communicated in an instant; the intelligence of kindred souls is quick as thought itself: in spite of his address the glance had passed and repassed, that carried with it the reciprocal sensation of two feeling hearts: nothing was said, but all was understood; souls can confer without the noisy vehicle of words.—Sir Roger Manstock was at this time talking with a labourer in the garden.

“ I must shew you the chambers on the upper floor,” said Isabella. Henry followed her in silence: the stairs were steep; he forgot himself, and let her lead the way: he suffered for his oversight as such forgetfulness deserved; his heart was doomed to encounter an emotion of another sort from that he had so lately felt. Ill-fated youth! are all Ezekiel’s precepts so soon forgotten? He would have told thee there is danger in every atom of a beautiful damsel, from the crown of her head even to the taper extremities of those elegant limbs, which thine unguarded eye took in. Thoughtless, devoted victim! whither art thou climbing? Thou dost but follow to inevitable sacrifice :

sacrifice: thy fate precedes thee, and trains thee up a precipice, from whence it is decreed that thou must fall.

At length they have reached the summit of their ascent: a door on each side opened to a bed-chamber, which seemed to say that here benevolence had provided an asylum for the repose of peace. The simplicity here displayed, which Horace in two happy words describes, I could not convey in twenty: it was elegance, that modest poverty would not blush to avow; it was taste so void of ornament that the disposer's excellence consisted in the concealment of her art.—“ You see,” cried Isabella, “ I have provided for the good man, who lodges with the widow; if he comes,” added she, pointing to the bed, “ there is rest from his labours.”

Henry took notice that Ezekiel's chamber was provided with a small nest of shelves for books; neither did it escape him that Isabella had conveyed a compliment to his charity by adorning his chimney with a print of the *good Samaritan*. In the chamber of Dame May she had hung a print also, which represented the story of the widow of Zarephath and the prophet Elijah. These, with many other cir-

cumstances in the accommodations of the house, shewed him how thoroughly Isabella possessed the happy quality of doubling her favours by the grace of bestowing them.

They now remounted their horses and proceeded to the mansion. To Henry, who had all his life been accustomed to the small and private scale of a country clergyman's establishment, this was a new and curious scene; as they passed through a Gothic gateway into the front court, a venerable personage, dressed in a tufted gown, and holding a silver-headed staff in his hand, presented himself to the wondering sight of our hero; at the same time a bell was tolled in the turret, which gave solemn notice of their approach, and summoned the domestics to their posts in the great hall: here, according to the fashion of old times, the Baronet took Henry by the hand and welcom'd him to Manslock-house. Scenes, that he had only read of in description, were now present to his view; every thing within the house perfectly corresponded with the stile and character of the exterior: walls built for perpetuity, rooms calculated for feudal hospitality, and space wantonly lavished without regard to œconomy or convenience, bespoke the rude magnificence
of

of the founder; the very servants seemed in age and habit of another century. The hall was hung round with banners and trophies of various sorts, both of war and of the chace: over an immense span of fire-place was displayed the family shield, containing a vast number of bearings properly illuminated and arranged according to the rules of heraldry, and at the upper end the portrait of an old man at full length in a black habit, with the ensigns of the garter and the blue ribbon hanging in a point from his neck, holding a scroll in his hand, on which was traced the ground plot of the house, and bespoke him to be the founder of it.

Sir Roger Manstock's family consisted of one only daughter; he had lost his lady about three years past. Isabella, the darling of her father, had now entered her eighteenth year, and since her mother's death had constantly resided with him, and of late had taken the post and presidency of mistress of the family. With a table always open to his friends and neighbours, Sir Roger passed his time in a constant residence at Manstock-house, in the center of a very noble property, beloved by all that knew him, and doing good to all
that

that depended on him. When his friends solicited him to stand forth as county member, telling him that all parties would join in electing him, his constant answer was, that he thanked them for their good opinion, but his utmost ambition was to live amongst them, fulfilling to the best of his capacity the duties of an acting magistrate and a plain country gentleman; in which station he humbly conceived he should serve them better, and approve himself a more useful member of the community, than by attending upon parliament, for which he modestly, and perhaps truly, asserted that he had no talents.

CHAPTER V.

The Coward out of Doors is a Lion in his own House.

HAVING now so happily disposed of our hero for a while, we are at leisure to look back to the state of affairs at Crowbery Castle, where the misadventure of Justice Blachford had made no slight impression. The Captain, who had laid his plan of the prefgang,

gang, as we have related, was now deterred from putting it to the experiment, not only by the shameful catastrophe of Blachford's murderous plot, but also by the consideration of Sir Roger Manstock's having taken Henry into his protection. Blachford's case was still extremely doubtful; he seemed to be dosing away his life, with few and short intervals of faint and imperfect sensibility; the skull was evidently fractured, and Zachary had pronounced upon the trepan as indispensable: it had been thought proper, however, to call in the assistance of a London surgeon, and his arrival was hourly expected. Nobody doubted his being the victim of his own plot; but O'Rourke, who probably would have brought it home to him in his own defence, had escaped from the people who apprehended him, and was far enough out of reach; nobody stirred in his pursuit, and the few persons, who were interested to conceal the evidence of Blachford's criminality, were much more likely to assist his flight than to stop it. To leave the matter mysterious, or rather to aim at making it so, was the most they could hope for: to cast suspicion upon Henry was out of their power, no chicanery could do that against the joint

joint force of so many witnesses, who could depose to the very words that O'Rourke had uttered, when he confessed that what he had done was by his master's orders, only that he had mistaken the person upon whom they were to have been executed; and this account, in which they perfectly agreed, was circulated over all the neighbourhood. In the mean time old Weevil the miller, who had been eventually the preserver of Henry's life, by persuading him to return with him through the park, was not idle in publishing his account of the affair, and the motives that induced him fortunately to advise as he did. Blachford, therefore, whether living or dying, was effectually ruined in reputation, and so universally execrated as the vilest of wretches, that even the Viscount himself, and his satellites the lawyer and the captain, were fain to disavow him. Still the heart of the proud peer rankled with rage and jealousy: disappointed of the revenge he had promised himself to enjoy through the means of others, and intimidated from taking any open measures of his own against the object of his malice by the firm language Henry had held in his late interview, his dastardly spirit had no other resource but to vent
itself

itself upon the defenceless party in his power, and in this his cruelty knew no bounds. In his treatment of Lady Crowbery he kept no terms of decency or reserve, publishing to all parties (not even his own domestics excepted) the charges he had against her—"Will you tell me," he wou'd ask, "that wife is virtuous, who was not only seen by others, but whom I myself saw, hanging upon the neck of a handsome vagabond, embracing him in her arms, and caressing him with all the ecstasy of an enflamed and guilty passion? Who will say that this is not an action that implies criminality so strongly, that ocular demonstration could scarce add to the conviction of it? What other motive but one can a woman of her sort have for a conduct so extraordinary towards a fellow, who is a perfect stranger to her, and who, till she put cloaths upon his back, had not a pocket to hold the money she lavishly bestowed upon him? Will any one persuade me that all these favours and fondnesses are to be accounted for from mere respect to the memory of a certain parson Ratcliffe, who picked him up as a foundling, and whom she has not set eyes on for these twelve years past?

past? The merest dupe in nature could not find credulity for such a tale."

In this stile his Lordship took every occasion to vent his grievances, and make public the breach between himself and Lady Crowbery: When in conference with her he would hold a harsher language; and as he pressed for answers, which the difficulty of her situation would not allow her to give, every interview served only to strengthen his conclusions and enflame his animosity.

It was generally suspected that a separation would take place, and this he had threatened her with; but when she showed a willingness to meet him in this measure, he seemed to drop it altogether, and the rather, as in that case her paternal estate would have remained with her, which during their joint establishment was so liberally applied to the common stock, that the major part of the family disbursements was provided for out of her fund. He had however long abandoned all hope of any benefit upon the contingency of his survivorship, and of an heir there was now no longer any prospect. As he had therefore no interest in view on either of these accounts, he

he kept no check upon his ill-humour and chagrin, but persecuted her without reserve, absolutely confining her to the house, and, as far as he could prevent it, not suffering her to correspond with any one, particularly her relations of the house of Mansstock, to whom he bore peculiar hatred and inveteracy.

“What does your uncle mean,” said he in one of his altercations, “by receiving that fellow into his family, who has so effectually destroyed the peace of mine? Can there be a grosser insult, a more outrageous breach of decency and good-manners, than thus to hold him up in my defiance after what has passed, and when he knows that I myself have discovered him in a situation, that no husband, who has any sense of honour, can put up with, nor a wife, who has any sense of modesty, would permit him to be found in? Does Sir Roger think that I want spirit to resent such conduct, or can he suppose that I am tame enough to submit to an indignity, which he renders ten times more galling by the countenance he shews to the despicable object of my resentment—your Ladyship’s beggarly Adonis?”

To this she patiently replied, “That her uncle knew her innocence, and the motives of that
tendernefs,

tendernefs, which pity for the sufferings of the guiltlefs had exorted from her; that with a heart naturally fufceptible of compaffion, ſhe had a further intereſt in the ſufferings of the young man in queſtion, as a relict of her valued friend Mr. Ratcliffe, who had protected him from his infancy, lov'd him as a ſon, and left the ſtrongeſt testimony in his favour, deſcribing him as endow'd with every good and virtuous quality, that can centre in the human heart: that for theſe reaſons ſhe had determin'd to ſtand in the place of her deceas'd friend towards an unfortunate youth, who ſeem'd deſtin'd to be the victim of ſuſpicion, and to meet puniſhment where he merited praife."

" 'Tis one thing," ſaid my Lord, "to protect; to careſs him is another: you, or I, or any body may relieve a beggar, but who embraces him? Your purſe you may pour into his hands, but your perſon you had no right to throw into his arms, ſeeing that I have a claim upon that, ſo long as it is my lot to be call'd your huſband, and your privilege to bear my name and title."

" True, my lord," ſhe replied, " your right and title to my poor perſon is abſolute and excluſive,

clusive, and had my heart been made of sterner stuff, I should not have yielded it even to pity, as you saw; to impurity it has never been surrendered since you call'd it your's. If your sense of pity cannot find excuse for mine, I must submit to my fate; I have no other means of softening your displeasure."

"Sincerity will soften it," said my Lord; "confession will in part atone for the injury which my honour has receiv'd, because to own your faults is one step towards repenting of them: confess then that you are in love with this young fellow, that you was captivated with his person, that you was surpriz'd into a weakness, which your constitution must apologize for.—Nay, start not, Madam! nor affect to be offended at what I suggest, for that you have lov'd is well known, and that you can go great lengths for those you love is not to be denied; why then may I not presume that your nature is the same, kind, soft and yielding as it ever was? A father's authority could not restrain you, why should I suppose a husband's can? Let me know therefore the extent of my disgrace, and I will then decide as shall be best both for myself and you: till then you must give me leave to suspect the worst, and to conclude

conclude against you as much from your silence and reserve as from my own reason and observation."

"In one word then, my lord, and I call Heaven to witness to the truth of what I say, I am as incapable of the idea you annex to my tendernefs for this young man, as I am of murder, incest, blasphemy, or any crime the most dire and detestable that only beings totally abandon'd can commit: the criminality you suspect me of wou'd be such as but to think of makes my blood shudder and my heart shrink back with horror."

"Hold, Madam; not so strong in your expressions, if you please; moderate the energy of your language, if you wish that I should credit the sincerity, or even understand the meaning of it: let me have a plain answer to a plain question—Did you ever see this young man before?"

"I saw him about twelve years ago, soon after my father's death, when he was a child under the care of Mr. Ratcliffe."

"Is he the bastard son of parson Ratcliffe?"

"That is a plain question truly, my lord: your delicacy might have couch'd it in politer terms."

"Very

"Very true, Madam, I should have been more select in my expressions, as I might have recollected that none are so affectedly regardful of the forms of delicacy as those, who have bidden adieu to the essentials of it."

"'Tis well, my lord; I shall give you no further opportunity of insulting me, by answering to no further questions: here ends our conference; proceed against me as you please; be as cruel as your heart will let you; there is a friend at hand that will soon rescue me from your tyranny."

"Say you so, Madam! Who is that friend?"

"Death."

CHAPTER VI.

Danger approaches, and the Doctor is dismiss'd.

IN this manner the sad and heavy hours dragged slowly on at Crowbery castle. Domestic altercations, jealousies, and complaints on the part of Lord Crowbery, pressed down the spirits, and now began to sap and undermine the constitution of his unhappy lady.

Her

Her confinement was become no less a matter of necessity than of obedience; she took her meals, and passed her whole day, in her separate apartment; and as great pains were bestowed in keeping the affair of Blachford's plot and its providential issue from her knowledge, it was not till after the dialogue recited in the preceding chapter had taken place, that she came to the knowledge of that disgraceful business.

His Lordship's suspicion pointed at Zachary as the informer on this occasion; and though a pretty strict watch was kept upon him in his visits, probably the suspicion aforesaid was not ill placed, for our honest Doctor had great attachment to his noble patient, and very little to her ignoble lord: our hero also had an interest in his heart; Blachford he detested, and though he did his duty to him faithfully and skilfully, for he had now performed the operation of the trepan, yet if he had been dressing the wounds of a wretch condemned for murder, he probably could not have felt less sympathy for the sufferings of his patient. The impression, which the story of Blachford's plot made upon Lady Crowbery's mind, was such as left a strong persuasion of my Lord's participation in that base attempt, and from this moment she
could

could not see him without horror: fixt in her resolution to enter into no further discussions with him, all intercourse between them was suspended.

One day, as she was sitting alone and pensive in her chamber, ruminating on the sad fortune of her life, and the miseries which an attachment fatally traversed had entailed upon her, as she drew out her handkerchief to staunch the tears that were flowing from her eyes, a little packet dropt on the floor, which she took up, and soon discovered to be the same that Henry had delivered to her, inclosing the ring, but which, in the hurry of her spirits at that moment, she had hastily put into her pocket, and from that time it had escaped her recollection.

What was her surprize, upon unfolding the envelope, to discover the very ring she had given to her beloved Delapoer, when they exchanged their pledges, and solemnly devoted their hearts and affections each to the other.

With eager trepidation she turned it over and over, minutely examining it in every part. The hair, the stone, the setting, the motto, every particle deposed to the identity of the object; not a doubt remained; astonishment

possessed her wholly ; she shook in every joint, and felt a tumult at her heart, that her enfeebled frame could scarce support. Happily she was alone ; and when she could command sufficient recollection to debate the case, and shape her thoughts into some form and order, she began to give them vent, talking to herself, in broken sentences, after the following manner : —“ The very ring I gave to Delapoer ! the pledge of love, my first, my only love ! assuredly it is the same ! I cannot be mistaken ! Oh memory of a fond fleeting moment, thou art much too faithful to deceive, or be deceiv'd ! How came it here ? Is he that own'd it living, and return'd to England, or is he dead, and dying, gave it in commission to some friend to render back to me ? Let me recal to mind what Henry told me ; a man had found it, a poor man, return'd from transportation ; that may be himself ; well may he call it so ; 'twas banishment, 'twas transportation for the crime of loving one, whom the hard heart of an inexorable parent wrested from his arms too late for honour. Ah cruel father ! there was a moment, when, if you had relented, your poor child had never known these agonies, that now must plunge her in the grave : had you permitted

mitted her to take her own heart's choice, and at the altar sanctify those vows, which Heaven had heard and register'd, your daughter had been now a happy mother, and posterity wou'd have blessed you ; instead of which, behold a jealous tyrant and a barren bed ! Oh ! barbarous soul-enslaving law, devis'd in an accursed hour to counteract the first great blessing pronounc'd by the Creator on his works, which alike makes wretched those who obey, and those who desperately evade it ; which gives a power to parents that is their curse, entailing a dreadful responsibility on such as enforce it, and violating the most sacred privileges of all who are restrain'd by it."

This said, she rose, and opening a little casket, where other tokens were deposited, lodged it amongst them, referring it to time, the revealer of all mysteries, to elucidate this amongst the rest ; and recollecting it had been told her by Henry, that the finder of the ring said he would call again for his reward — " Alas ! " said she, as this reflection occurred, " what have I to bestow, that Delapoeur wou'd now deem a reward ? Cou'd I endure the meeting, ought I even to wish it ? Shou'd I not in discretion avoid it ? If there

is any remnant of affection left in his heart for me, will not the sight of such a faded form, and the discovery of my wretchedness, give anguish to his feelings?—But then my son! my Henry!—How else shall I disclose to Delapoe the interesting intelligence that he is a father? O Henry, for thy sake I wou'd abide that trial!”

It was now the hour for Zachary to pay his professional visit: curiosity, or some motive not connected with kindness, induced Lord Crowbery to accompany him on this occasion: his presence was not calculated to quiet uneasiness of any kind; and Zachary's fingers had no sooner touched his patient's pulse, than he gave my Lord a significant look, which not only indicated alarm at what he discovered by his touch, but seemed to intimate that he knew, by his intuition, where the cause of it was to be found.

“ I am told, madam,” said my lord, “ you are indisposed; I should wish to hear the nature of your complaint, and what this gentleman's opinion is of your case.”

“ So please you, my lord,” replied the man of medicine, “ it is not our practice to discuss those points in the hearing of our patients.”

“ Cannot

“ Cannot you prescribe then,” said the Peer, “ when I am present ; or have you no advice to offer, till you have consulted with her Ladyship what remedy she likes best ? ”

There was a taunting sneer in this, which Zachary’s spirit did not quite relish ; he had all due consideration for the dignity of a noble ; but he was not without some sense of his own consequence, and the honour also due unto the physician : he answered, therefore, with more quickness than was expected, that, to the best of such judgment as he possessed, he should prescribe in due time ; but there was a disorder in her ladyship’s pulse, which he took to be incidental rather than symptomatic, and he believed the best remedy for her case, at present, would be perfect quiet and a silent room.

“ By which I am to understand,” rejoined the Peer, “ that you cou’d very readily dispense with my company, and remain here yourself—will that promote silence, do you think ? If you have nothing to say that I shou’d not hear, and silence be so necessary for her ladyship, I can sit here without opening my lips, whilst you pursue your observations without interruption, and meditate at leisure on the remedies you are to apply.”

“ My Lord,” replied the sage, “ if I am worthy to be entrusted with the health of Lady Crowbery, I hope I am not suspected as unfit to be left with her in private.”

“ No more arguing, Mr. Apothecary, if you please,” quoth the noble intruder ; “ do the business you are sent for ; and remember, that it is for the contents of your gallipots, and not for the charms of your conversation, that I employ you in my family.”

“ I have been employ’d,” quoth Zachary, “ for my lady and her family, many years before I was honour’d with your Lordship’s commands, and I never was treated in Sir Andrew’s family but with confidence and kindness : I hope I am not likely to forget my station in society, and how far it is removed from that, which your Lordship now fills ; but I can at the same time recollect, that the distance between them has not always been so great.”

For the better understanding of this glance, at the conclusion of Zachary’s reply, we must inform the reader, that the noble personage, at whom it was pointed, had, in the early days of his worldly pilgrimage, walked in the humble line of an officer of his Majesty’s customs,

in which station he was totally unnoticed by the head of his family, and, indeed, by every other family whose notice was worth having, until the title, and such part of the estate as was entailed upon it by a variety of intermediate contingencies, devolved on him. Though not deficient in talents of a certain sort, he had been greatly cramped in his education by the poverty of his parents, and, as far as precept and example reach, very little benefited by either. With the great world, since he had been made a part of it, he had formed little or no acquaintance; and conscious of his deficiencies in the acquirements of a gentleman, he had never taken his seat since his accession to the peerage; shutting himself up in his castle with a few mean dependants about him, who flattered him in his humours, whilst they fed at his table, he lived in sullen pride, avoiding all his neighbours of a better sort, and avoided by them. When he made proposals for his present lady, he had newly succeeded to his title, and, it may well be presumed, he was more indebted to a certain incident in her history, well remembered by her father, though carefully concealed, than to the elegance of his own manners and address. A title and

estate, however, were circumstances not overlooked in the brief catalogue of his accomplishments; they doubtless had their weight with Sir Andrew; and for the lady's share in the transaction, that was purely negative; a broken spirit, a dubious reputation, and a blank indifference to all mankind, with one exception only, made her consent to an act of duty and atonement, not of choice and free will. In this manner they married, and upon the terms which such marriages naturally produce, they lived together joyless, comfortless, childless.

The glance, therefore, which Zachary had retorted upon his lordship's former obscurity, roused his present dignity into a flame of rage. It is not in the art of the most ingenious tormentor to punish the object of his vengeance half so bitterly, as the proud man, without any art or ingenuity at all, naturally contrives to punish himself. No sooner had Zachary's words entered the porches of his ears, than in an instant, like *the leporous distilment* described by Hamlet's ghost, it coursed through all the natural gates and alleys of his blood, post-haste, to the seat and head quarters of the spleen (if any of my readers know where that is to be found) and there it swelled and fermented at
such

such a rate, that his bosom was not wide enough to hold it, but out it burst, sputtering and frothing, from his lips, in accents very little resembling those that shortly after fell with gentle cadence from the softer lips of Lady Crowbery. Enough was understood, from the inarticulate vehemence of his lordship's wrath, to discover that Zachary Cawdle, surgeon, apothecary, and man-midwife, was in no future time to exercise any one of these several branches of his art within the walls of Crowbery Castle, or upon the person of any one who belonged thereunto.

Zachary had risen from his seat with an irascibility little less than boiling hot, and with a countenance, whose scarlet hue of downright honest anger wonderfully contrasted the pale and sickly complexion of his lordship's malice, when the gentle invalid, directing a look of mild benevolence to her discarded attendant, addressed herself to him in the following terms—"Farewel, my long approv'd and worthy friend! I lose your services when they can be of no further use to me; you see the situation I am in, and you know it is incurable. It is not in your art to save me, and you are only dismissed from a fruitless attendance, and

the painful spectacle of an expiring friend. For all past care and kindness, and a thousand zealous offices, which your good will to me has prompted you to perform, I render you my last, my cordial thanks. Go to my uncle Manstock; tell him I am in a fair way to shake off all complaints, and want no more medical assistance: when that is over, and my cure completed, he will shew you that your services have not been overlook'd, and that I have bequeath'd you a fee, which I hope will set me clear at the close of our account."

"God forbid! God forbid!" cried Zachary, the tears bubbling from his eyes, "it shou'd be my sad lot to outlive you. Providence in its mercy restore you! But continue, I beseech you, the valerian draughts: I had other medicines in reserve; but I take heaven to witness, I am dismiss'd from my attendance, when my patient's pulse is at a hundred and twenty-five."

CHAPTER VII.

Shews how some People pass their Time in the Country.

ZACHARY returned disconsolate to his shop.—“How do we go on at Lord Crowbery’s?” quoth Alexander Kinloch.—“The devil take Lord Crowbery,” replied Zachary, “and that blind bitch Fortune into the bargain, for putting a coronet over the ears of a custom-house officer.”—“She has put a crest as well as a coronet over his ears, if Fame says true,” resum’d Kinloch, with a grin.—“If Fame says that, Fame lies,” said Zachary. “A fellow that but yesterday, as it were, trampt about with a pen and inkhorn in his button-hole, to talk to me in such a stile: I have been treated scurvily, friend Sawney; he has dismiss’d me from all further attendance on his lady: poor dear soul, she will be lost without my help; there is not a man in England can discern the cause of her complaint so well as I can; it breaks my heart to think that any other person shou’d prescribe to her; yet there’s not a minute to be lost, for her pulse was going at an hundred and twenty-five

when I left her.”—“ That betokens a crisis,” said Kinloch.—“ Right,” quoth the Doctor, “ and ’tis then the patient has most need of a physician; *urgente morbo adfit medicus.*”—“ I foresaw what wou’d happen,” cried the North Briton; “ your own dear wife has made all the mischief, tattling about Henry and my lady, and how they met at your house, and what passed at their meeting when she hug’d him in her arms, which has been told my lord; and so they wou’d not let the man be a cuckold in quiet, but must be talking to him about it, which, if it was your own case, you must confess, is not the pleasantest thing to hear; but for my part I make it a rule to let all such trifles pass, and say nothing of the matter.”—“ Aye, aye,” answered Zachary, “ you are a wise man, Sawney, and know how to keep peace and silence in a family; but my tippling faint of a wife has such a curst tongue of her own, that there is nothing she so dearly loves as scandal, except it be the brandy-bottle; but her pleasure will be her poison, for she’s tack’d in the liver, and tumbling off the perch. As for that blustering lord, his custom I shou’d not value at a doit, nor his castle neither, if my lady was not in it; I can live with-
out

out either; for I don't believe that obstinate fellow has taken a dose of my drugs these ten years past, and if he lets it alone for ten years to come I care not; let him go off in his own way; I shou'd be sorry to save him a trip to the other world, and employ my skill in his cure, which I must in conscience do, was I call'd in; 'tis exactly the case with justice Blachford; I know I am defrauding the devil of his due by keeping him alive; but if a man won't die when his brains are out, how can I help it? If some folks had had the handling of his scull, the world before this wou'd have been rid of a monster."

Whether the deputy doctor took this as a side-blow at himself I cannot say, but certainly a learned dispute sprung up between him and his principal upon the application of the trepan, which branch'd out into so many zig-zags and crosscuts, and was carried on with so little method, and so much abuse of brevity, that after Zachary's vanity had run foul of Alexander's spleen, his choler began to chafe and fume at such a rate, that pestle and mortar never set up a more clamorous argument than now ensued between master and man, which
was

was only put an end to by the superior din of Jemima's bell.

In the mean time the hours at Manstock House moved on in harmony and peace; each division of the day had its appropriated occupation or amusement: the morning ride, the social meal, the evening walk, the hour of rest, each link of time kept it's due place and period: order and regularity were so perfectly observed throughout the whole establishment, that though the spirit of the master pervaded every part, his voice was no where heard; the domestics were a numerous body, but, like well-disciplined veterans, each knew his duty, and no one swerved from it.

Here our hero might have reposed in absolute tranquillity, had his feelings been less alive to the disconsolate situation of his suffering mother, or had his wandering fancy (for why should I conceal the truth?) permitted him to enjoy the comforts of an amiable society, without a profest partiality to any one in particular belonging to it: but nature and philosophy are at constant variance; the warmth which one inspires ill suits the coolness which the other prescribes. Though the
conver-

conversation of Sir Roger and the Reverend Mr. Claypole offered all the edification that experience could minister to a youthful hearer, yet perverse nature (or something we are willing to ascribe to nature) biased the judgment of our hero so as to induce him to prefer the slightest syllable, that gave motion to Isabella's lovely lips, before all the anecdotes of Sir Roger, or the metaphysics of Mr. Claypole: this was not a preference which his understanding gave, for that he never called into council on the question; but he listened as his eyes directed him, and judged as his heart prescribed. Though he was not to learn that time moves on with equal step, yet he miscalculated most grossly, reckoning hours but as minutes when alone with Isabella, and minutes as hours without her. Any other person would have found out these were symptoms of love, Henry only found out they were mistakes, and never ventured to search into the cause of them: Isabella, who was even less experienced, and somewhat younger than himself, was so sure that she loved no human creature comparably to her father, and really did love him with such true devotion, that she had no idea there might be attachments of another sort

to

to share her heart with him, and, in the full conviction of her own security, never once thought of what she held impossible to happen; she took her evening walks with Henry by her side, and then the weather was so fine, or the prospect so charming, or the discourse so entertaining, that the minutes stole away so imperceptibly she could not understand how they were gone so fast, and she so far from home; now she must hasten back, and Henry's arm was wanted to assist her speed: stiles sometimes intervened, and then both arms found full employment; hillocks, and dales, and foot planks over rills with waters half a foot in depth tremendously rolling underneath, demanded a conductor of no small address; in defiles and difficulties like these, all Henry's care was none too much; yet they occurred so frequently, that slander would have said they were more sought than shunned.

Sometimes, when nothing more material occupied her thoughts, Isabella would divert the subject of discourse to questions about Susan May.—“Did’nt Henry think her very pretty?—Was’nt she a very open-hearted natural girl, a little wild or so?—Had’nt she turn’d off her late mistress on his account? and did’nt

did'nt that look as if she had a liking for him?"—These were leading questions, which Henry did not always chuse to follow without swerving. With a great respect for truth, he had something more than respect for the person he was to address it to, and though he scorned to say what was directly false, he did not altogether like to say what was strictly true. A little equivocation, but as little as his delicacy could dispense with, he certainly made free with upon these occasions; and if Isabella did not give him perfect credit for sincerity in all particulars, it was because she was as thoroughly informed of facts, as Susan's full confession, honestly avowed, could make her: she was not however so mere a novice in the world as not to comprehend that there are subjects, on which men of delicacy will not be perfectly explicit; but on the point of reputation Isabella was as forward to believe, as he was firm in asserting, the perfect innocence of Susan's conduct; pure in her own nature, she was too candid in her judgment of others to suspect that want of chastity was implied in freedom of behaviour.

In their conversations about Lady Crowsberry, their hearts and tongues completely coincided

incided in bearing testimony to the loveliness of her nature, and in lamenting her unhappy lot.—“ I should not wonder,” said Isabella, “ if that cross ugly creature was to scold and scandalize my poor cousin for what he saw in the plantation walk, when her benevolent heart overflow’d with tenderness and pity for you, so that she could scarce support herself from sinking to the ground ; his hard nature is not capable of understanding, and allowing for the soft emotions of a soul like her’s. I know what she felt on your account, because I have heard her talk so warmly in your praise, and how Mr. Ratcliffe lov’d and admir’d you ; and then she wou’d bewail his loss, and the misfortunes which it brought on you ; I know also the impression that Lord Crowbery’s behaviour made on her, and how she execrated that horrid Blachford, whom Providence has now chastis’d ; and I don’t doubt but she foresaw some wicked plot wou’d be concerted against you, as in fact it was : all these terrors were in her mind when she was so affected as to fall upon your neck, and vent herself in tears ; and who can wonder at it ? What is so touching as the sight of innocence distress’d and persecuted ? How could a heart so soft
and

and sensitive as her's reflect on all that you had suffer'd, all that you was still expos'd to, and not melt with sympathy? Was ever act so noble, generous, and humane, rewarded with such base, malicious, and unjust oppression? For my part I cannot conceive how any one of common feelings can hear the story and be unmov'd: I'm not asham'd to say my tears kept pace with her's on the occasion; yet I was not inform'd of all particulars, as she was; neither was I, like her, the friend of Mr. Ratcliffe; I had not seen you, but as you pass'd into the house of Mr. Cawdle; she had both seen you and discours'd with you, and heard those worthy creatures at the cottage, in their natural manner, relate a thousand circumstances, which your modesty would not speak of. Heavens! must we be hypocrites because we are women! withhold our love for virtue in the dread of slander, and not bestow our praise and admiration where they are so justly due! That would be hard indeed! But when we see a character like this accused, insulted, punished, treated like a malefactor and a murderer, all mouths open, all hearts shut against him, without a friend, or house, or food, but what one poor widow and her charitable cruise supplied, what

what heart can stand it? and he must be a monster that can doubt my cousin's purity, because her arms encircled what her heart pitied and approv'd."

Here Isabella paus'd: Henry was silent; it was a subject he would not venture to commit himself upon; his too great sensibility to a mother's praises might excite suspicion: Isabella resum'd her discourse—"To be sure, if people will decide from appearances only, the most innocent actions may be construed into guilt, and, as I take Lord Crowbery to be one of those people, I am sadly afraid my poor cousin may suffer wrongfully by his hasty temper; not that he can seriously and from his heart suspect a woman of her established character; but he may pretend to do it for the malicious pleasure of tormenting her; for I am sorry to say, I think him capable of being very cruel, nay I am sure he is, having been a painful witness of very harsh treatment on his part; in short, he is a bad husband, and nothing surprises me more, than that a person of her taste and intuition should have been deceiv'd by such a character; and that with youth, beauty, great fortune, and good sense, she should be induc'd to marry a man neither suitable to her
in

in age, manners, principle, or person ; nay, I rather wonder she should marry at all, at least whilst her father was alive, for she was then exactly in the situation I am now, the only solace of a widow'd parent ; and sure it is a daughter's duty (Heaven knows I feel it such) never to quit that post till nature's debt is paid by one or other of the parties."

As she spcke these words, they had approach'd the gate that opened to the garden from the park ; Henry advanced towards it, but, stopping short, he turned, and with an anxious look asked if what she had now delivered was her determined purpose and opinion. — " Assuredly it is," she said ; " for what have I to think of, blest with such a father, but to please and study him ? Can I fulfil two duties at a time ? Never will I devote less than my whole heart to him ; how then can I divide it with another ? No, no, that is impossible : whilst he has life and health I shall be happy in my present state ; if Heaven should snatch that blessing from me, I shall have full employment for the short remainder of my wretched days in mourning and lamenting him."

The tears were starting from her eyes ; sympathy, or some other impulse, struck the heart

heart of Henry: he supported himself against the gate, trembling and pale, as if some sudden faintness had come over him: it was a transient attack; a few moments sufficed to recal his recollection; when, half sighing, half smothering a sigh, he thus began in gentle terms to controvert what she had said—"Your sentiments, Miss Manstock, are too amiable not to be admir'd, but suffer me to say, too melancholy to be admitted without some reserve: Daughters have sacrific'd their youth and beauty to the pious offices which you describe; but it has been to parents helpless and distressed, to age, to poverty, or to sickness, which otherwise had wanted those kind services that they bestow'd:—the Grecian Daughter was a heroine that stands, as you well know, recorded to all ages for her filial piety; she fed her father in a prison, but take notice, he had else been famish'd; remember too, that daughter was herself a mother; and, let me not offend your delicacy if I presume to say, that in a heart like your's, filial affection may possess its place, and yet make room for connubial love, without restricting either. To put the case, that any man is likely to be found, who may deserve your love, is more for argument
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than fact; I know of no such man, nor am inclined to think our sex can boast of one, who merits such distinguish'd happiness; but grant there was, could he desire to divert you from the exercise of those attentions, which must at once endear your character to him, and by his sharing them might recommend his character to you? Think for a moment what his gratitude must be to the author and bestower of all his earthly happiness; by heavens! I think his reverence and devotion to your father must be such, as hardly to be exceeded by your own; how then, by adding his attentions, could the sum of them be less? When age and infirmity shall call for support, might not his manly strength, activity, and courage conspire to uphold that venerable parent, which your soft sensibility and gentle pity would be employ'd to soothe? This, you must own, would be to double rather than divide your grateful task. But when you speak of dedicating your surviving days to sorrow, I must hope you speak but as you apprehend, and not as you wou'd act. I know, alas! the agonizing loss of one, that was to me a father, a voluntary father; and, methinks, that is an obligation on my part beyond what Nature can impose; a duty more
impressive

impressive than the nearest ties of blood can devolve upon a son: that father is dead, and his death plung'd me not only in affliction but in adversity; still I have a post to keep, and I must not desert it: one man, at least, snatch'd from destruction, has some cause to say I have not liv'd in vain; but you, belov'd, admir'd, ador'd, you should well reflect, before you give yourself to such sad thoughts, how many you make sad thereby; for, be assur'd, should you sink under affliction, you would not sink alone."

Nature hath given to some a tone, a manner, an expression, that makes language but a secondary vehicle for what passes in their mind: this endowment Henry possessed in a most striking degree; his heart was in his features, voice, and action. Isabella needed no interpreter to understand his feelings in their full extent: how to recal a resolution vouch'd so solemnly she knew not, yet something she wished to say or do to mitigate it.

By one of those unpremeditated movements, which Nature sometimes betrays us into before our perception can correct it, her hand was pressed by his: which was the aggressor in their meeting neither party knew; the one
therefore

therefore could not reprove the other, yet both were awakened to reflection at the same moment, both sympathized in the same effect, and both were overspread with blushes. There was a thrilling nerve that ran to Isabella's heart, through which her sensibility conveyed a voice that whispered to her—"She had said too much:"—a second notice intimated to her—"That 'twas no crime to love:"—a third, and that was followed by a throng of soft insinuating ideas, suggested to her pity a regret, that one so brave, so young, so generous, so engaging, should languish in despair, and deprecate her stern decree in vain.—"He'll die," these tempters said, "if this your cruel resolution should take place: why tell him he must never hope? 'twou'd be but charity to leave him that delusion for his temporary comfort."—To all these arguments her heart in gentleness accorded, and as language was not needful, and probably not present for the purpose, in that instant he felt, or fancied that he felt, a gentle trembling pressure of his hand by her's: a blush of sensibility glowed on his cheeks: it was health to his sick hope, light to his dark despair, oil to that dying spark, which reason scarce permitted to languish in his desponding bosom:

still he repress'd all rapture ; tenderly, but yet respectfully, he stoop'd his lips upon her hand —“ You are all excellence,” he cried ; “ ’tis so I should expect the friend of my protectress, and the daughter of the best of men, to console the mourner : I have been witness to your filial love and piety, Heaven grant I never may be witness to your sorrows ; for Heaven can testify how gladly I would meet my death to rescue and preserve that sacred life, so dear to you, and keep affliction from the tenderest heart that ever animated the most lovely form.”

CHAPTER VIII.

He is the true Hero that can conquer himself.

THE next morning brought Doctor Zachary Cawdle to Manstock House. No sooner did the figure of old Bess, shuffling under the non elastic load of her rider in the cinnamon suit, cross the optics of our hero, then upon a solitary ramble in the park, than he ran to the encounter.—“ What news,” cried he, my worthy master ?”—“ Ill news,” quoth the rider in cinnamon, “ for those who are
sick,

sick, when I am dismiss'd : that pettyfogging peer has put me out of his house, when the situation of his lady should have kept me in it."—"No matter for that," eagerly resum'd the other; "tell me how that lady is."—"How should she be," again quoth Zachary, "when I am not allowed to come near her? And do you say no matter for that? Marry, but there is a great deal of matter, and matter of a very ugly nature, and a very rapid pulse, let me tell you; and I should think no man, who has ever been within the sound of my pestle, wou'd have the hardiness to say, no matter for that."

"Pardon me, my good Doctor," replied Henry; "mine were the words of impatience, not of contempt: I am very seriously alarm'd for Lady Crowbery."—"Enough said," quoth the Doctor; "'tis natural you should be alarm'd for one so near to you, and your impatience is excuseable. As we have here no listeners within reach of us, I shall let you know that I am made privy to what has pass'd between you and your mother, and that I bear you the blessing of that best of ladies; she is indeed a faint, a suffering faint and martyr to the meekest persecutor in creation."—The

filial heart of Henry swelled with indignation, his eyes sparkled, and his cheeks flushed, as he broke forth into vehement denunciations against Lord Crowbery, and it was with some difficulty Zachary could preach him into patience; the storm, however, subsided by degrees; and when Zachary told him, that he came over at his mother's desire, to consult with Sir Roger Manstock, he became perfectly calm, and declared that he would resign himself to what that worthy person should advise: at the same time he said, that he could not but lament the peculiarity of his situation, which invested him with a character, that he was not permitted to avow; and as the relation in which he stood with regard to Lady Crowbery was not known to Sir Roger Manstock, he could not expect, that any such part would be assigned to him in that lady's vindication, as his interest in her wrongs would otherwise intitle him to demand. The result of the conference, however, was an appeal to Sir Roger in the first place, and for this purpose Zachary proceeded onwards towards the house, whilst our hero struck into the grove adjoining, which, by a more circuitous path, led to the same point.

Upon entering this scene of meditation and retirement,

retirement, Henry found himself unexpectedly encountered by a fair nymph, whom fortune seemed to seize every occasion of throwing in his way, when solitude and secrecy conspired to put his virtue to the test. Susan May was on her return from the village, where she had been to welcome her mother to her new habitation, which she had that morning taken possession of it. Though certain events had now parted these friends into separate spheres of life, Henry accosted her in the same stile and manner as when they lived together upon the level: their conversation began by her recounting the kindnesses of Miss Manstock to her mother, and the comforts she had provided for that good woman in her new abode: Ezekiel Daw had staid behind to attend the calls of Justice Blachford, who, in his lucid intervals (if such they might be termed) was visited by certain fits of terror and compunction, which made the spiritual assistance of that pious creature not unwelcome to him, and it is needless to remark, that from duties like this Ezekiel was, by no interest or allurements, to be detached.

Henry's mind was just now, too much occupied to be in the best of all possible dispositions

tions for the present meeting, but it was not in his nature to give pain to a fond heart like Susan's; he made no effort, therefore, to divert the conversation from those interesting points, to which she wished to lead it. Few girls of Susan's sort had greater quickness of intuition; and as love is, in some cases, a mighty sharpener of the eye-sight, she had taken her observations pretty accurately as to the effect of Isabella's bright eyes upon the heart of Henry, and being fully satisfied she had no chance against such a rival, she good-naturedly resolved to do him all the services in her power with that young lady, and though she had little comfort to administer to him at present, yet she discerned enough to warrant her in talking on the subject, and reporting such particulars as might serve, at least, to keep the spark of hope alive; when Henry, therefore, asked her if she was happy in her service, she answered, that her young lady was an angel for goodness, and if she herself was not as happy as she might be, it was only because she was not altogether so wise as she ought to be; but time, she observed, would cure her of those follies which had taken such possession of her:—"A kind word however," added she, "now and then bestow'd
upon

upon me, when superior objects do not engross your attention, will be a generous way of assuring me, that I am not entirely out of your thoughts; more than this I do not expect, but without this I should indeed be wretched."

Henry consoled her with the most soothing assurances, and he accompanied them with certain tender looks and actions, which carry more persuasion with them, than the strongest professions can convey without them. Turning to him with a smile—"Ah! my dear friend!" she cried, "I suspect there is a certain lady of mine, not far off, who will give you the heart-ache before long, and then you will know what it is that we poor love-sick mortals suffer; these evening walks of your's, with that captivating fair one, will lead you into a maze that will puzzle you to escape from, unless I give you a clue to guide you out of it. We women of the chamber have many opportunities of diving into the secrets of our mistresses, especially of such as, like my lady, are all nature and sincerity. I must tell you then, in one word, that there is a terrible resolution gone out against all mankind at once, never to marry; she has made a vow to devote herself to her father; she has not the most distant idea

of falling in love; and has been very curious in her enquiries, how it came to pass that I suffered myself to be surpris'd into so extraordinary a weakness. I laid it all upon Nature and a tender heart: this she did not admit; for she contended, that her heart was as tender and her nature as compassionate as another's; that she could pity the unfortunate, admire the brave, and applaud the deserving; but to sigh, and pine, and languish, as she conceived I did, was what she had no conception of. Love to our parents, and good will to the rest of the world, she thought was all that any one heart could fairly entertain, and as much as in reason it ought to undertake for. At this I smiled, and took the freedom to tell her, (for she is the most frank and affable creature living) that, according to the old saying, it was every body's fate to fall in love once in their lives; and if that was true, my destiny was past, and her's was to come: as for myself, I own'd I was justly punished for presuming to think of one so infinitely my superior in all respects; but nobody could prevent their fate; and I doubted if many were to be found, who could be indifferent to any object so deserving."

"There you spoke too humbly of yourself,"
said

said Henry, "and too partially of your friend." — "My young lady did not seem to think so," replied Susan; "and, if I have any guess at her heart, you have more interest there than she is aware of." — Here they found themselves at the extremity of the grove, and within sight of the house. — "Adieu!" cried Susan, "I must not be seen with you: — Persist courageously, and you will conquer: my life upon it, Miss Manstock has a heart dispos'd to you and love." — "Has she so?" cried Henry, and suddenly stopt short, whilst Susan quickened her pace, and left him to his reflections. — "Has she a heart for me and love," he repeated; "and shall that flattery tempt me to persist? 'Tis fatal flattery, and I will not pursue it. Grant it were truth; grant that I cou'd succeed to gain an interest in her heart, to shake her resolutions, and detach her from the dutious purposes to which she has devoted herself; can I reconcile such conduct to the principles of honour, and the gratitude I owe to her father, the uncle of my mother? What presumption wou'd it be in me to conceive, that I can be acceptable to Sir Roger Manstock, as a pretender to his daughter! 'Tis impossible! Circumstanc'd as I am, it is against all reason.

to suppose he cou'd admit of my addresses. What then am I doing? Gratifying a propensity that will be my ruin ; listening to advice, that, whilst it flatters my vanity, conspires to blind my reason, and betray my honour. I will not persist ; no, Susan, though I were sure to conquer, as you call it, I will not follow your seducing council ; I will stop whilst it is yet in my power ; I will tear myself away from the snares, which every moment of delay will draw closer about me, and escape, whilst I have strength and resolution for the effort. If ever that day comes, when Sir Roger Manstock shall know me as the cousin of Isabella, and if this tumult at my heart shall be quieted by time and absence, he may then once more receive me, as one attach'd to him by gratitude and consanguinity, and permit me to pay to him the devotion of a son, and to his belov'd Isabella the attentions of a brother : this will be something still ; it will be tender friendship, it will be love, that strikes no sting into the conscience ; it may assuage her sorrows when she will want a comforter, and enable her to say, when her father's eyes shall close—' I have fulfill'd my promise, I have persisted in my resolution, and devoted my whole heart to the
pious

pious duties of a daughter.'—By heavens! 'tis great, 'tis noble! Shall I rob her of this triumph? I will go this instant, and prepare for my departure."

CHAPTER IX.

It now becomes doubtful, if a certain Hero is any Hero at all.

HAVING thus decided betwixt love and honour, our hero, firm in his gallant purpose, marched triumphantly to the house; here, on the very threshold of the hall, he was met by the lovely object who had occasioned all his struggles.—“I have been seeking you,” she said, “all over the house: I am terribly afraid there is some bad news of my dear Lady Crowbery, for her Doctor is closetted with my father, and I dare not interrupt them. They have been calling for you in the library, and I am sure you will put me out of suspense as soon as you can learn what it is that has happened.”—“Certainly,” replied Henry; “but I believe I have heard the whole: Lady Crowbery is indispos’d, but I hope not dangerously;

gerously ; if I hear any thing more, you shall be informed of it."—This said, he pass'd on to the library, where Zachary and the worthy Baronet were in close confabulation : at their desire he seated himself between them.—
" Henry," (said Sir Roger Manstock) " I have just now receiv'd a very unpleasant account from this gentleman, which makes it necessary for me to pay a visit to my niece at Crowbery castle, without delay. I am afraid there is too much cause to apprehend a speedy decline ; and as my Lord is not dispos'd to avail himself of this worthy gentleman's skill and experience, it behoves me very seriously to urge him to some other measures for her relief, with all the expedition that her case demands. If this were all I had to do, I shou'd not suppose that any difference cou'd arise between my Lord and me ; but I suspect there will be some points of a more difficult nature to discuss, in which we cannot possibly agree, so long as he persists to avow certain jealousies and suspicions of his lady, my niece, which I hold to be highly injurious, and totally without foundation : in this part of the business, Henry, it happens that you are involv'd ; and though I want no protestations on your part to satisfy
my

my mind in the matter, yet if Lord Crowbery either cannot, or will not, be brought to reason upon any other terms, than your consenting to put yourself at a greater distance than where you now are, I am free to say, it is a requisition, however unreasonable, to which I shou'd be dispos'd to sacrifice the enjoyments I derive from your society, rather than to leave him any pretence for the complaints, which, I understand, he makes of me, and the very harsh treatment, which, I am griev'd to hear, he practises against my niece."

Henry now heard the very measure proposed, that he was pre-determined to adopt; his answer therefore was ready, and his acquiescence unqualified.—" I shall be gone, Sir," he cried, " before his lordship can repeat his murmurs against you for harbouring a guest so obnoxious to his repose: as for the suspicions he annexes to my stay in his neighbourhood, I will not so degrade the evidence of truth and innocence, as to honour those suspicions with a discussion; they are the forgeries of his own malicious imagination, fabricated with the base design of giving some colour of excuse for that tyranny of temper, which it is natural to him to indulge in, and of which,
it

it seems (just Heaven requite him for his cruelty!) your injured niece, and my ever honour'd benefactress, is to be the victim. For her sake I am not only ready to forego the comforts, the delights of abiding here under your protection, but to remove myself to any distance, far as sea and land can carry me, if so requir'd, beyond the reach of his pretended jealousy. But let him have a care how he does more than brood in secret on his suspicions; let him confine his murmurs within the dark recesses of his own gloomy breast; let him take heed how he circulates them beyond the walls of that castle, in which he keeps innocence immur'd; for if any word of his shall reach my ears, by which he attaches my name to an imputation, that my nature shrinks from with horror unutterable, the cause is then my own, and I will bring him to so strict a reckoning, as shall either silence his calumny, or stifle my resentment, for ever."

As the youthful hero of this story thus delivered himself, his eyes glistened, and the spot of anger glowed upon his cheek. Sir Roger noted his emotion, and was enraptured, not less by the contemplation of his countenance, than by the energy of his sentiments: so
charmed

charmed was he with what he saw and heard, that his heart smote him with compunction for having signified to him a kind of warning from his house.—“ Gracious Heaven !” he cried, turning to Zachary, and striking his hands together, (as was customary with him when surprised with any sudden thought) “ am I to sacrifice the delight of cherishing a spirit like this, in compliment to the caprice of a domestic tyrant ? What store of virtues do I contemplate dawning in the bosom of this gallant youth ; and shall I lose the pride of fostering their growth ? It is too much : Henry, my noble fellow, we’ll set this paltry Peer at naught ; I never can consent to part from you.”

Age had not deadened the sensibility of this venerable old man ; he was greatly moved, his voice shook, and he clasped the hand of Henry in his. Zachary, who had much of the milk, or rather the butter, of human kindness in his composition, melted like a thaw ; and taking out his handkerchief, without any finesse, began a tune upon his olfactory organ little less sonorous, and not more musical, than the cow-horn of Joe Jenkins. Our hero himself was shaken, but not overthrown ; his
courage

courage reeled, but it did not go back from the post he had taken, and he maintained his resolution of abiding by Sir Roger's first proposal, which he asserted to be necessary on more accounts than one; at the same time he expressed a hope, that he might be allowed to accompany him to the castle, where he thought he had a right to appear, as the party accused; and observing withal, it was possible that Sir Roger, in conference with a person of Lord Crowbery's brutal nature, and alone, might not be treated with all the respect due to his person and character.

This proposal did not suit the spirit of Sir Roger, neither was it a thing practicable or advisable, so that he put a peremptory negative upon it at once, adding, in a tone of voice somewhat above his usual key, that if an affront was offered to himself or family, though he was too old for hasty measures, he was not yet past the age for manly resentment. He now ordered four horses to be put to his chaise with all haste, and desired Henry to inform Miss Manstock, that he was simply going to pay a visit to Lady Crowbery, and wou'd return to dinner.

Charged with this commission, Henry returned

turned to the hall, where the lovely Isabella was still waiting, and made his report. She expressed herself much alarmed by the tidings, not only on Lady Crowbery's account, who, she feared, was in a very dangerous way, but on her father's also; she declared there was nothing she more dreaded than his interview with Lord Crowbery; his visits there were at all times unpleasant, but much more so on the present occasion, when, she was sure that cruel man would fly out into some violence, and, perhaps, say or do something so very galling to her father's spirit, as might draw him into a serious quarrel; and what then would become of her! the mere possibility of it was terrifying in the extreme.—“ Oh! this odious visit,” she cried, “ wou'd it were well over! I cannot think of it without trembling.”

To these tremors and apprehensions Henry applied all the comfort his kind consideration for such generous feelings could suggest: He promised her he would take a horse, and ride over to Crowbery, on the pretence of visiting his friend Ezekiel, but, in fact, to be at hand for any service that occasion might require; he begged her to rest assured that no attention should

should be neglected by him, where a life so valuable to her, to himself, and to the world at large, was concerned; but as for any danger personally affecting her father, from the brutal manners of that dastardly Peer, he held that in sovereign disregard; he had seen enough of my Lord to know how far his insolence could go, and where it would stop.—“He would fain,” added he, “have practised it upon me, when he considered me as a wretched helpless worm, that he might safely tread upon; but no sooner did he see that worm cou’d turn upon him, than he shrunk back like a coward as he is, and in spite of all his pride and haughtiness, lower’d his high tone at the rebuke of a poor friendless being, whom he expected to have crush’d with a word.”

This consolation so effectually cheered the filial heart of the grateful Isabella, that she reassum’d her spirits, and with a smile, that gave animation to a thousand charms, expressed her thanks with so captivating a grace, that if Henry’s heart, assailed by so many interesting sensations at once, was just then in no humour to fulfil its self-denying resolution, some excuse may be fairly offered for his transient infirmity of purpose.—“I’ll not leave sight of
the

the chaise," he said, "either going or returning. If Sir Roger Manstock does not approve of my accompanying him to his interview with Lord Crowbery, nothing shall prevent my being watchful of the issue of it, and attending upon him in every other moment of his absence from you."

"You are infinitely kind and indulgent to my weakness," said Isabella; "and I know your gallant spirit is such, that every thing it protects must be safe; I will therefore dismiss my fears on my father's account;—then tendering him her hand with a look of modest sweetness and benignity—"Fare you well," she cried, "I shall think them heavy hours till you both return; but I hope we shall have a cheerful meeting at dinner time, and a pleasant walk in the evening."—With these kind words dismiss'd, he was going, when she call'd him back, saying—"One word more before we part: I insist upon your not taking that flighty animal you rode yesterday; and if you will do me a particular favour, you will exercise my mare for me."—"I shall be in continual terror," replied Henry, "least any accident shou'd befall her."—"Judge then," rejoin'd she, "of me by yourself, and let your fears,
that

that have such a trifle for their object, give place to mine, that have so much at risque."

"Where am I?" said Henry within himself. "What is become of the resolution I had taken?"

CHAPTER X.

Symptoms of falling in Love.

SIR Roger Manstock had no sooner set out, attended by Henry on Isabella's favourite mare, when Zachary Cawdle summoned old Betty to the door, and at that instant recollected a small packet he had in charge from Lady Crowbery, to deliver to her son: vexed at himself for his forgetfulness, he saw no better way of redeeming his neglect, than by putting it into Miss Manstock's hands, requesting her to give it to Henry on his return: he then took his leave, and departed, having a patient or two to visit by the way.

Isabella retired to her chamber; she took up a book, opened it at random, run her eye over two or three pages, and threw it aside; she was not in the humour for reading. Susan

was

was dispatched for her work-bag; she rummaged it for something to employ herself upon; nothing suited her fancy, though several things presented themselves to her choice; the bag fared no better than the book; both were discarded.

"I am just now," said she to Susan, "in that sort of humour, when one can fix to nothing, and yet I want something to occupy me."—She then began to examine the little packet she had in charge for Henry; she could perceive that it contained a ring; it puzzled her to divine what Lady Crowbery could intend by such a present: she put it into her purse, and for some minutes sat silent and thoughtful; then directing her eyes to Susan, who was employing herself in some arrangements of the toilet, "I am convinc'd," she cried, "that Henry has an excellent heart. I begin to think, Susan, that though it is a very foolish thing to fall in love, and every girl's duty to guard herself against such idle notions, yet in your case, I can suppose, it was hardly to be avoided, where you had so many opportunities of knowing the good qualities of that engaging young man: it is not every body can be content only to admire and
approve

approve a person and character like his.”—“ I hope, Madam,” replied Susan, “ you will not think the worse of me for owning that my heart is capable of love.”

The conference was now fairly opened ; by Susan, with a design to probe the heart of her fair mistress ; by Isabella, innocently, incautiously, and with no other motive, but for the present relief of certain new and hitherto unexperienced sensations, of which she neither knew the real nature or extent.

To Susan’s frank appeal above recited, she candidly replied—“ No, no, I don’t altogether condemn you for being capable of love, but I am afraid you have bestow’d your love upon one, who is not susceptible of the like passion : I take Henry to have a mind superior to the weakness of liking any woman, but as a friend.”

“ To the weakness of liking me in any other light,” Susan modestly replied, “ he is certainly superior ; I know the little services I did him in his distress are rated by him above their value, for he has a grateful and a feeling heart ; too generous to treat me with unkindness, too sincere to deceive me with false pretences ; for what am I, to aspire to a
person

person of Mr. Henry's sort, conscious as I am that he is of high birth, with such talents, so accomplish'd, and with so fine a person."—

"He has indeed a very fine person," repeated Isabella.—"I have never seen his like," resumed the other.—"But you yourself are very handsome," said the lady, surveying her with a gracious smile.—"I handsome!" said the damsel, affecting a surprise at a compliment, which had been repeated to her a thousand times; "surely, Madam, you are laughing at me; such a clownish girl as I am can have no charms for Mr. Henry."—"Did'n't I tell you," said Isabella, "he had no heart for love?"—"It would be happy for him if he had not," Susan answered; "for I am afraid his love is likely to produce nothing but sorrow and disappointment."

Isabella eagerly demanded what she meant—

"Pardon me," replied Susan, "I must not explain myself; neither shou'd I have ventur'd to say a word on the subject, if I cou'd have conceiv'd what was so plain to be seen cou'd have escaped your notice. I am sure he wou'd be very angry with me, was he to know that I presum'd to hold such discourse with you, Madam; but I shou'd indeed have thought, that of
all

all persons living you wou'd have been the last to doubt if he had a heart for love. Alas! he only loves too well for his future peace and quiet, and, I fear, he will live to rue the day that ever he came within the walls of Manstock House."

"Heaven in its mercy forbid!" cried Isabella, "that any thing shou'd befall him in this house, that might cause him to regret the coming into it! I am sure, if I am innocently the occasion of it, sooner than be the means of bringing him into misery and misfortune, I wou'd, I wou'd—" Here she faltered, not daring to complete the sentence as her feelings dictated it. The intelligent waiting-woman well understood her embarrassment, and prompted her to a conclusion, which, at the same time, she knew was far short of her meaning.—"You wou'd pity him," she said.—"From my soul," cried the lovely Isabella, with an agitated air and accent; "I wou'd run away and hide myself, if I thought what you allude to was the case, and that my presence gave him pain."—"That can more properly be done on his part," said Susan; "and if I may venture to guess at his fate, that sad remedy will very shortly be resorted to."—

to."—"How so! how so!" exclaimed the fairest of her sex, her fine face glowing with blushes, and the tear of sensibility stealing down her cheek, "is he going from us? I wou'd not have him leave us for the world! what can he see in me, that shou'd frighten him away?"—"Every thing that is lovely and engaging," replied Susan; "that's out of all doubt. But when he sees what he must love, and cannot hope to obtain, if he has one grain of spirit, which I think he does not want, he will escape whilst he can, and not persist to stay, where every hour must render him more fond and more unhappy."

This was a conclusion that Isabella could not parry; it was an inference from her own asserted resolution, which she was not aware of, and could not answer: probably, if Susan had not just then reminded her of that unlucky resolution, she might have been as well pleased; and it is more than probable, had she never let it pass her lips, this was not the very moment she would have chosen for imparting it; it was done, however, and Isabella was not so regardless of consistency as to revoke it; she had made a vow, and vows are too sacred to be sported with; she could be silent, at least, and cut short a

conversation that so pleasingly had led her on into a dilemma so embarrassing ; this she could do, and this she did.—“ Fetch me my cloak,” she cried ; “ it is time for me to take my walk.”

Sir Roger Manstock, in the mean while, followed by Henry on horseback, proceeded rapidly towards Crowbery ; arrived there, he entered the castle, whilst Henry struck off towards the cottage on the green, where Ezekiel Daw still sojourned in pious attendance on the dying justice. The good man was at home when Henry rode to the door, and received him with the greeting of a father to his son.—“ Welcome, my dear child,” cried Ezekiel, as he took him by the hand ; “ never trust me, but it maketh my heart glad to behold thee. Let it not be a wonder with thee, that I tarry here awhile, till it shall please the Lord to dispose of this wretched creature, languishing on the bed of death, conscience stricken, and wounded in the spirit no less than in the flesh. Thou may’st well believe I have not fail’d to awaken him to a proper sense of his lost and desperate condition : as his returns of reason are but short and rare, I have made the most of them, and set forth the heinousness
of

of his sins with all due horror, and in its blackest hue. As death hovers over him momentarily, I have prepar'd his ears for the awful sound of the last trump, and the dreadful warning of eternal condemnation. Fain wou'd he have snatch'd at the vain hope of pardon and forgiveness; but I told him not to flatter himself with any such fallacious hopes; and that his offences against man must first be aton'd, before he thought of mercy from God: he appeal'd to his present sufferings, and demand'd of me, if I did not think they were punishment sufficient for all the crimes he had meditated or committed. I forbid him to draw any comfort from such false persuasions, reminding him, that mere pains and sickness cou'd not expiate offences; that he was indeed diverted from the perpetration of a murder by a sudden judgment, but it was the hand of Providence, and not his change of purpose, that had frustrated that horrid design; the crime remain'd with him, though the execution of it had been turn'd aside; I advis'd him, therefore, to solicit your forgiveness in the first place."—"He need not doubt of that," cried Henry, with eagerness; "I heartily and from my soul forgive him, and I beseech you so to assure him."

him.”—“Thou speakest, Henry, as it becometh a Christian to speak; but I much question if these tidings can be imparted to him; by me at least they cannot, seeing I am interdicted from all further visits to him, by one who hath the care of his body, but regardeth not the salvation of his soul. A certain eminent practitioner hath come down from London to inspect his wounds, and advise in the case. The man is a notable man in his profession, and no less skill’d in pharmacy than surgery; but, alas! he lacketh the one thing needful; for he declaimeth vehemently against my spiritual admonitions, crying out amain, that they depress his pulse, disturb his spirits, and sink him into that despondency, which defeats his efforts, and portendeth death. Thus doth this man of medicine set his face against those wholesome terrors of the Lord, by which we persuade men; but, in truth, this Mr. L—, of whom so much is said for his skill in the management of wounds, regardeth not the doctrine of a wounded conscience, which, probably, he hath no experience in.”—Henry smiled: Ezekiel made no stop.—“However, I have taught the sick man that, which has sunk deeper into his brain than the surgeon’s

geon's probe can reach ; I have sown those seeds in his heart, which the enemy cannot root out ; and, I flatter myself, he hath a feeling foretaste of those torments, which are prepar'd for the impenitent sinner in the world to come."

" Alas ! alas ! my zealous friend," cried Henry, " cou'd you not, in pity to a dying wretch, strike out one spark of comfort from the hope we have in God's all-gracious mercy ? Cou'd you preach nothing short of absolute despair ? How can a wretch repent, who has no hope of pardon ? If you display all hell before his sight, how can he lift his dying eyes towards Heaven ? Indeed, indeed, my pious friend, you have been too gloomy in your doctrine."

" And who shall tell me that !" exclaimed Ezekiel, " a boy ! a child ! a new born babe ! Wilt thou reform, correct, reprove my doctrine ! thou ! Remember the fate of those saucy brats that mock'd at the prophet Elisha ; a bear out of the forest devour'd them ; I don't say it will be exactly thy fate, for there are no bears in England, I know that well enough ; but have a care of a judgment no less ; have a

care, I say, young man, how you flout at my doctrine."

"I flout not either at you or your doctrine," replied Henry, "but I compassionate the situation of this unhappy Blachford; and if he feels contrition for his faults, why shou'd he not be cheer'd with hopes of being pardon'd for them?"—"I tell thee, Henry," quoth Ezekiel, his gust of anger being now pretty nearly blown off, "there is not a more deceitful propensity in the heart of man, than what is call'd pity; it is as unlike true charity as it is unlike strict justice; some people have a soft heart, and a watery eye, at every body's command that chuses to apply to them, by which means they are dupes of every knave and impostor, who can put on a crying countenance, and tell a canting tale; but a nature of this cast is only active, when it is spurr'd into motion by some interesting spectacle; provoke it not, and it sleeps; mere pity never seeks for employment; it is a virtue of parade and popularity; it searches not for distress, nor follows the sequester'd mourner into his melancholy haunts, to administer the secret charities of consolation and relief; these offices demand a firmer spirit,

rit, nerves better brac'd, and a more manly nature, that can face affliction without whimpering, do its business boldly, and wipe away the widow's tears with a steady hand. What is it to me that a rogue is on his death-bed? he is a rogue no less; and I don't see the charity of sending him out of the world with a lie of my telling, because the truth is unpleasant to him to hear. Blachford has been a tyrant and an oppressor all his life long; he has not felt for others, neither does he now; his feelings are for himself, and if he has any compunction, his fears call it up; it is not voluntary repentance; 'tis the dread of death, the remorse of a thief at the gallows."

Here Ezekiel fung forth in his best key.—
 "Let us not judge too harshly," cried Henry;
 "Heaven only knows the hearts of men: we will leave Blachford to his conscience, and turn our thoughts to a more interesting object. Have you any news of the Lady Crowbery?"—"Ah!" said Ezekiel, "I fear there are dark doings in that quarter: she is a prisoner, and, which is worse, she is sick and ill, and has been order'd to Lisbon, if her Lord will let her go thither."—Henry now, with much anxiety, questioned Ezekiel as to

his authority for this intelligence, and found that the London surgeon, who attended Blackford, had been called in by Lord Crowbery, who could no longer shut his eyes against the alarming situation of his Lady, and this gentleman had pronounced a change of climate absolutely necessary, and recommended the air of Lisbon without delay.

The chief object of Sir Roger's visit was thus anticipated, and though the news was painful in the extreme to Henry, yet he drew the consolation from it, of seeing the way smoothed for a peaceable conference between the parties now met at the castle; and it further opened to him a prospect of better opportunities for paying his attentions to his mother, when separated from her tyrant, and in a foreign country, whither he was determined to resort, and at the same time disengage himself from the snares of the too charming object, who had taken such hold of his heart.

CHAPTER XI.

*An angry Altercation with a Person unknown
leads our Hero into imminent Danger.*

THESE pious and prudent resolutions of our hero for renouncing his abode at Manstock House, and following his mother to Lisbon, were not taken without a struggle; for all complaints on the part of Lord Crowbery were more effectually avoided by his remaining with Sir Roger, in the absence of the Lady, than by his leaving him, to which it could not fail, but that suspicious conjectures would be affixed. This was a staggering circumstance, and could hardly escape being stated and opposed to him by the hospitable Baronet, nay, perhaps, by Isabella herself, and of her powers of persuasion, should she exert them on the occasion, he had full sense and conviction; neither was it absolute despair, from which he was preparing to retreat; there was no repelling sphere about the lovely person of Isabella; on the contrary, all was attraction there, all was sweetness and smiles; still native honour, reverence for the feelings of a father, and a due sense of the young heiress's

superior pretensions, held him to his purpose; but, above all other motives, devotion to a suffering mother decided against all temptations.

Ezekiel had left him to these meditations, and was gone to the next door, hoping to find some opportunity of making Blachford acquainted with Henry's forgiveness of his attempt against him. In the mean time a person entered the cottage, whom he recollected to be the finder of Lady Crowbery's ring: though he no longer presented himself in the mean and humble dress he before appeared in, his countenance was pale and sickly, and his frame emaciated, yet there was something noble and impressive in his air and deportment. After the ordinary salutations, he desired to know if there was any message or commission from Lady Crowbery. Henry informed him, that he had nothing of the sort in charge. This was heard with strong expressions of surprize. Some small acknowledgment, he owned, he did expect for his honesty; what did she say upon the delivery of it? She took it, and said nothing, was the answer.—“Impossible!” exclaimed the disappointed stranger; “Lady Crowbery would not receive it in that stile; such indifference

ference is totally out of character; it exceeds all credibility. Suffer me," he added, very seriously, "to desire you will be pleas'd to recollect yourself; any one word you can call to mind, as utter'd by her on that occasion, will be of moment to me; consult your memory, I beseech of you; perhaps it may have slipped you in the hurry of your thoughts; nay, it is possible, being so small an article, you may have forgotten to deliver it."—"How, Sir!" exclaimed Henry, sternly fixing his eyes upon him.—The man paid little regard to this angry interjection, but went on with his discourse, observing, that it was nothing extraordinary if the memory of a young man should fail him in a commission not very interesting.

"I stand in need of no apologies," replied our hero, "for defect of memory; I am clear in what I tell you, and having once asserted it, shall repeat it no more, nor patiently submit, that any question should be made of my veracity."—"You talk loftily, young Sir," said the stranger; "and before we proceed any further in this kind of altercation, it will be proper for me to clear up some preliminary points between us, that may else involve you in a mistake you may repent of. Appearances,

I presume, have deceiv'd you; from what I said to you at our last meeting, when I confided to you the ring, you doubtless consider'd me as a needy abject man, and yourself, then newly taken into favour by Lady Crowbery, as my superior; before you suit your conversation to that idea, I must forewarn you, that you are talking with a gentleman."

"I am sorry for it," replied Henry; "as I cannot put up with those suspicions from a gentleman, which, in a vulgar person, I shou'd have disregarded: you talk'd to me of being return'd from transportation, and in such a man it was an unexpected merit to restore the property he had found; but what can a gentleman require more, than the satisfaction of knowing, that the owner of the ring is in possession of what she had lost? This you are now inform'd of, and you must prepare your mind, before we part, to dismiss every shadow of doubt, that I could possibly be guilty of a false report."

"Hold," replied the other, "I cou'd never in my life regulate my thoughts at the word of command; and if you mean to make them accord to your wishes, you must give me some leading aids towards conviction of your sincerity, before I can repose implicit faith in it:

it: the word, that pledges the honour of a gentleman to me, I shall not dispute; I am ready to acquiesce in it; but I am not willing to make a tender of my confidence to a person, who exacts such high demands upon me, until I am convinc'd he is entitled so to do; let us, therefore, interchange explanations with each other, before you require, or I render, satisfaction for what you seem to treat as an affront. Inform'd as I am, I am to consider you as a child of fortune, newly emerg'd from the lowest state of human wretchedness; your looks, your language and demeanour, certainly are not those of a mean uneducated person; give me therefore your name, condition and pretensions; and I will give you mine; then, if you tell me Lady Crowbery has receiv'd the ring I sent her by your hands, and treated it as a bawble not worthy her remembrance, and the sender of it as an object not deserving her enquiry, I think I must be compell'd, hard as it will be even then, to say that I believe you."

Our Henry's candour saw the reasonableness of this stipulation, and the dilemma was a very awkward one to which he was reduced by it; sensible that he could not justly press his requisitions any further, yet unwilling to submit

mit to the indignity of being doubted—"I am not at liberty," he replied, "to give you the information you require; I must leave you, therefore, to draw your own conclusions, and we must part, as we met, strangers to each other. Your disappointment about the ring certainly has an anxiety in it, that goes deeper than to the mere fact of my delivering it or not to the Lady Crowbery; but whatever my curiosity on that account may be, I have no right to be inquisitive as to your secrets, so long as I withhold my own. When you appeal to the Lady, you will find I have told you truth; but I did not recollect to tell you, that she never saw the ring I gave her: it was wrapt in paper, and she, being in haste, put it into her pocket without examination; if then there is any mystery about it, and more was annexed to it, than as a common trinket dropt from her finger, you have the satisfaction of knowing there was no time for her to develope it, neither have I set eyes on her since."

"It is enough," exclaimed the stranger; "I am satisfied, completely satisfied, and ask your pardon for my hesitation in giving credit to you: had you told me this at first, I shou'd not have express'd myself as I did."

Anger, which in Henry's bosom had no
lasting

lasting tenure, instantly disappeared upon this apology, and he began to explain as much of his own history as was proper to be told. This was attentively listened to by his companion, who owned having been betrayed into wrong notions, as to his connection with Lady Crowbery, report having stated to him, that her Lord was jealous of her on his account, and not without grounds—"these you have now," added he, "very naturally accounted for, and 'tis too clear, that the man is by nature a suspicious tyrant, and that he uses her most harshly: Alas! poor Lady, how I pity her hard lot; but how, in the name of wonder, cou'd she ever consent to join herself to such a husband, whose person she cou'd not like, and whose manners cou'd never have been suitable to a woman of her taste and elegance? I am not acquainted with Lord Crowbery, but I have had a glimpse of his person, and some traits of his character; I own I cou'd not have suppos'd Cecilia Adamant, one of the richest heiresses, and most accomplish'd young women of her time, wou'd have condescended to the proposals of such a suitor."—Henry said, he supposed it was a match of her father's making, and such marriages, he observed, were not apt to be happy.

"I can

"I can readily believe," replied the stranger, "that her father forced this odious Lord upon her; for, if I am rightly informed of Sir Andrew's character, he was capable of some violence, and not very well dispos'd to consult his daughter's inclinations; she perhaps, might yield to his authority, and consent to be miserable for life, rather than disobedient in any one act of it. From my soul I compassionate her! And now she is dropping into a decline, and must go to Lisbon; this I gather from the person himself, who advis'd it: mark, therefore, the issue of these matches of compulsion. What has not that parent to answer for, who forces a child, against the natural bent of her affection, into the arms of a man, whom her heart revolts from! But it is a painful subject, and we will say no more on it."

"Agreed!" cried Henry, rising from his seat; "let us dismiss this melancholy topic; besides, my time is expir'd, and I have business I must now attend to."

END OF BOOK THE FIFTH.

BOOK

BOOK THE SIXTH.

CHAPTER I.

*The Author hints at a Reform in the Constitution
of a Novel.*

IT is my wish to devote these short prefatory Essays to our fraternity of Novelists, if haply my good will can strike out any thing for their use and profit ; it is, therefore, in the friendly spirit of criticism, that I protest against a practice, which some few of the corps have lately taken up, of adulterating their compositions with a dash of politics, which I conceive to be a kind of fraud upon their customers, that not only brings disgrace and loss upon themselves individually, but is injurious to the trade in general. I shall not point out the particular offenders, as they are sufficiently noted by those, who have read their productions ; and, if they have but wisdom enough to reform, I should be loth that past errors should be remembered to the prejudice of their future fortune.

I trust,

I trust, they need not be told, that there are clubs and coffee-houses in this free country, where nonsense may be talked with impunity; but it is a serious risque to print it. Round their own fire-sides their zeal may boil over without scalding their fingers; but when they cater for the public, they should be warned how they mix up any such inflammatory materials, as temperate stomachs will not bear; our only aim should be to refresh our friendly visitors with an exhilarating wholesome draught, not to disturb their reason with an intoxicating nauseous drug.

All that I am bound to do as a story-maker is, to make a story; I am not bound to reform the constitution of my country in the same breath, nor even (Heaven be thanked!) to overturn it, though that might be the easier task of the two, or, more properly speaking, one and the same thing in its consequences. Nature is my guide; man's nature, not his natural rights: the one ushers me by the straightest avenue to the human heart, the other bewilders me in a maze of metaphysics.

Doubtless, it becomes the gentle nature of a female votary of the Muse, and of every author soft as females, to let no occasion slip
for

for making public such their amiable propensity, through every channel that the press affords; the poor African is therefore fair game for every minstrel that has tuned his lyre to the sweet chords of pity and condolence; whether he *builds immortal verse* upon his loss of liberty, or weaves his melancholy fate into the pathos of a novel, in either case he finds a mine of sentiment, digs up enthusiasm from its richest vein, and gratifies at once his spleen and his ambition. The happy virtuous negro, torn from his own fine temperate climate, and transported into the torrid heats of our inhospitable islands, there to sweat and bleed beneath the lash of barbarous task-masters, inspires so fine a rhapsody, and gives so touching a display of British cruelty, that, against the force of truth, the unguarded reader credits it, and blushes for the country that he lives in. No matter that the world at large bears testimony to the charities of our land, to her magnanimity, her honour, her benevolence; though thousands of the persecuted sufferers for conscience sake fly to Britain as the universal philanthropist, in whose arms there is a sure asylum for the wretched, still the degrading fiction bears down truth; black troops of savages are raised
to

to cast the nation's character in shade; the African lives free and happy under the mild government of his native princes; he never licks the dust in their presence, nor loads the gibbet to adorn their palaces, and, though snatched from death by his purchaser, yet not emancipated from slavery by his employer, he must be taught to murmur, and the sigh, which he cannot draw from his own bosom, must be inspired into him by the breath of others, till urged by these incendiary condolences, he shakes off his contentment, rises terrible in his enthusiasm, and, though redeemed from death by those whom he destroys, sates himself with carnage, and ripping forth the heart of his benefactor, shows the trophy of his freedom, and gloriously asserts the Rights of Man. Cast your eyes towards those blood-besprinkled islands, which ye have conspired to illuminate, ye merciful reformers, and glory in your doctrines, if your consciences will let you. I blush to think, that folly can effect such mischief.

A fast friend to the interests of the press, and a great authority in point, who vends our wares to the amount of one hundred thousand volumes annually (Heaven augment his little modicum

modicum of trade!) ingenuously acquaints us with those honest arts, by which he rose to eminence so justly earned; of these, one trifling requisite, amongst many more noble acquirements, he mentions to be, that of keeping himself always *pr̄etty well informed of the state of politics in Europe*, not exactly by the reading of novels, nor purposely for the writing of them, but for reasons much more wise and weighty, namely, because he has *always found, that bookselling is much affected by the political state of affairs*. May the secrets of all the cabinets in Europe be ever open to a politician, who makes so good an use, and draws such worthy profit from his information; and I would to Heaven, those wrong headed zealots of our fraternity above alluded to, had his political knowledge for our edification, or would copy his prudence for their own amendment.

This experienced personage further observes, that *the best time for bookselling is, when there is no kind of news stirring*: it is a little mortifying, I must own, but his authority is conclusive, for he tells us, that *then many of those, who for months would have done nothing but talk of war or peace, revolutions and counter-revolutions, &c.*

&c. &c. for want of other amusement, will have recourse to books. If this observation be true, (and who can doubt that men love talking better than reading?) the author's golden age is that of public tranquillity; how ill then does he employ his talents, who instead of exerting them for the peace and quiet of mankind, turns them to the purposes of discontent, of *revolutions and counter-revolutions*, writing the world into such a temper, that no readers are left in it? The true patriot in the republic of letters is he, who, in times of war and tumult, can so write as to invite the world's attention to his peaceful studies, and divert it from its sanguinary politics; the incendiary author, on the contrary, is a fool and a *felo de se*.

If men, therefore, have so little disposition towards the purchasing of books, when there is *so much news stirring* abroad, let him, who writes at such a moment, give double diligence to what he writes; let him so manage it as to contrast the tædium of the politician's task, and not revolt him with a double dose of what he is weary of. Strong efforts will succeed, when feeble ones must fail; novelty and surprize will ever attract admiration, the most enthusiastic passion of the human mind; and

and though the philosophy of Rome cried it down, Plato himself confesses it to have been the moving spring of the philosophy of Greece.

Here then we discern the proper province of works of fiction; for *novelty and surprise* (as Bishop Warburton defines them) *are the inseparable attendants of imposture*; and the very time, when strong attractions are required to draw men to their books, is the time for such productions to appear, and the strength of their attraction will depend upon the writer's care and talents. Now, though *novelty and surprise* are what we aim to treat our readers with, we are no otherwise *impostors*, than those fair-dealing jugglers are, who candidly warn their spectators before hand, that their tricks are nothing more than mere slight of hand, the effect of nimble art and practised adroitness, by which they cheat the sight, but aim not to impose upon the understanding; like them, the Novelist professes to deal in ingenious deceptions, but deceptions so like truth and nature, that whilst his performances have all the vivacity of a romance to excite admiration, they have the harmony of a history to engage approbation. Monsters, and prodigies,
and

and every species of unnatural composition are not to be admitted into a novel, for these tend only to raise wonder in the ignorant and superstitious, and are a sort of black art, now universally exploded. A writer of romances, in the present age, cannot make so free with the credulity of his readers, as Herodotus or even Livy did with their's, though profest historians.

A novel may be considered as a dilated comedy; its plot therefore should be uniform, and its narrative unbroken: episode and digression are sparingly, if at all, to be admitted; the early practice of weaving story within story should be avoided; the adventures of *the Man of the Hill*, in the *Foundling*, is an excrescence that offends against the grace and symmetry of the plot: whatever makes a pause in the main business, and keeps the chief characters too long out of sight, must be a defect. In all histories, whether true or fictitious, the author cannot too carefully refrain from speaking in his own person, and this is yet another reason to be added to those already given, why political discussions should never be admitted in a novel, as they are sure to be set down to the author's account, let him assign them

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them as he will. It is not necessary that the leading character of a novel should be honest and amiable, but it is indispensable it should be interesting and entertaining; and every writer, who wishes to endear man to man by pleasing pictures of human nature, or, in other words, by presenting virtuous characters in amiable lights, will let the good preponderate over the evil; he will not take his maxims from Rochfoucault, nor shape his fellow-creatures after the models of Hobbes or Swift; the spirit of the author will be seen in the general moral and tendency of the piece, though he will allot to every particular character its proper sentiment and language; the outline will be that of nature, and fancy will dispose the group into various attitudes and actions, but the general colouring and complexion of the whole will reflect the peculiar and distinguishing tints of the master.

CHAPTER II.

A terrible Encounter, in which our Hero is totally discomfited.

WHILST our hero had been occupied at the cottage, Sir Roger had concluded his conference with Lord Crowbery. Nature had endowed the worthy Baronet with an evenness of temper, that was a great sheather for the ill humours of those he had to deal with. On this occasion, however, matters passed better than he had laid his account for; not that the conversation went off without some mutterings on the part of the Peer, but they were such as rather shewed his fullness than ferocity.

The reception given to Henry at Manstock House was touched upon, with a kind of contemptuous sneer at the weakness of Sir Roger for admitting such a guest.—“But perhaps,” added my Lord ironically, “you find all those charms in his elegant society that my Lady your niece did; or, if you yourself don’t immediately discover them, your fair daughter perhaps may, for prejudices are apt to run in families;

families ; and, I dare say the young gentleman well knows how to profit by such prejudices ; but you, no doubt, have weighed these matters well before you made an inmate of him."

Sir Roger, who was no dealer in fine speeches and insinuations, took little notice of this trash, and turned the subject to his niece's illness. My Lord replied, that she was certainly much indisposed, for which, in fact, she had to thank herself ; that for his own part he had done, and should continue to do, every thing in his power for her recovery ; change of climate had been suggested to him, and by authority he was much inclined to defer to. His neighbour Blachford had called down a very eminent surgeon from London, and he had taken his advice in Lady Crowbery's case ; it was the very Mr. L——, who had made so wonderful a cure of Sir George Revel, after his duel with *Arundel* in Flanders.—“ I confess to you,” said the Peer, “ I am charmed with him ; he talks to the understanding, and I comprehend what he means ; but he will not let us decide on what he recommends without a reference to the faculty, and it seems we are to have a consultation of physicians in London,

who are either to pass their patient on to Lisbon, or revoke the voyage, and take other measures ; so the matter stands at present ; but if you wish to see your niece, she will give you fuller information."

Sir Roger said, it was what he much wished, and notice being given to Lady Crowbery, he was instantly and gladly admitted. To his great surprise, he was suffered to be alone with her ; the moments were precious, and she availed herself of them for putting a packet into his hands, containing her will, and other important papers, the seal of which he was not to break but upon the event of her death.

" You will find," she said, " that I have made provision for this unprotected youth, whom Ratcliffe's death has thrown upon my care ; and if your candour ever shall be shaken by the vile reports, that have been raised against my fame, you'll see so full a confutation of them in that paper, that, however they may affect me living, dead, they cannot rest upon my memory. Whether my Lord believ'd what he took pains to propagate I'll not pretend to say, but now at least I can no longer be an object for his jealousy, and, to do
him

him justice, I must own he has relax'd much of his severity, which happy change I am indebted for to the good offices of the gentleman, who has been called in upon my case : I see that he compassionates my sufferings, and I've reason to believe he guesses at the cause of them ; I am told, he has had long sittings with my Lord, and it is clear that he has gained an influence over his bad humours, of which I happily experience the effects, witness the present moments I enjoy with you ; but we'll make prudent use of them, and not trespass on indulgence so precarious. Farewell ; if I am destined to Lisbon, and my Lord allows of it, I hope that we shall meet once more."—Thus ended this affecting interview, Sir Roger parting with a heavy heart, encharged with many kind remembrances to Isabella and to Henry.

Our hero, who had kept watch upon Sir Roger's departure, joined him as he came out of Lord Crowbery's gate, and, when he was clear of the park, at his request, got into the chaise, and gave his mare to one of the servants. Sir Roger's spirits were sensibly affected, and it was some time before they were sufficiently recovered for him to enter upon a recital of what had passed, and a description of the state in which he found Lady Crowbery : it was not,

however, his manner to paint in strong colours, so that all which Henry collected from this description was, that his niece looked very ill, and was much altered since he had seen her last: of his interview with my Lord he simply observed, that it was a disagreeable job well over; he was a man, he said, in whose company he was never at his ease; he dealt too much in dark hints and side blows to please him, who had no taste for any talk but what went right onwards to the point before it.—“There is no proscription, however, against you,” said the Baronet; “and if there was, perhaps I should not have regarded it, for I am too old to be dictated to in that style, and told what company I am to keep. He is pleas’d to be considerate of my repose, and would not be sorry to make me as jealous of my Isabella on your account, as he pretends to be of his own lady; but I can assure you, Henry, such absurdities make no impression upon me, and I desire you will take no notice of it to my daughter. ’Tis true, Henry, you are a handsome fellow, and, I hope, in proper time, some honest girl may be of the same opinion, and make a man of you; but if my heart never aches till Isabella is in the fault of it, sorrow and I shall never be acquainted more.

more. Apropos to that," added the Baronet with an encouraging smile, "here is my friend Claypole's niece coming to us this very day; Fanny is a fine girl, and, between you and me, has a hawk's eye at a handsome fellow; if you mind your hits, who knows what may come of it? She has a very pretty independency, I can promise you."—"And I am a beggar," said Henry.—"Not so, not absolutely so," replied Sir Roger; "I have that in my hands, which will keep off beggary at least. I don't promise, nor wou'd I have you expect, any great matters; but I have my niece's word for saying you are remember'd in her will, and that will is in my keeping, so you won't be beholden to a wife for the bread that you eat, as some folks are."

Henry was high-minded enough in conscience, and there were few people from whom he would have relished this kind of discourse; but he took the Baronet in his own way, and contented himself with observing, that he was ill-qualified for a fortune hunter, for he should be as scrupulous with respect to the good qualities of a wife, and as indifferent to her money, as if he had the fortune of a prince in possession.

They were now entering the avenue that opened to the house, when Henry, suspecting that Isabella might be upon the look-out, and alarmed with the sight of a led horse, begged leave to stop the chaise and get out. The measure was a considerate one, for his presentiment was verified by the sight of that young lady walking towards them up the avenue: he galloped onwards, and greeting her with the good tidings, that all was well, stopt his career, and leapt to the ground in an instant of time; in the same instant joy illuminated her bright eyes, and glowed on her cheeks.

Oh! all ye Loves and Graces, what were you doing at that moment to make your favourite, already mistress of poor Henry's heart, so irresistibly alluring, and why thus league yourselves in mighty combination against one weak son of nature, unhappily too sensitive for his repose? Why meet him, lovely Isabella, with that magic sweetness, those alluring smiles, and, to a form so beauteous add those charms, that would have recommended homeliness itself—the nymph-like robe tucked up above the instep, locks loose and flowing, quick breath, and panting bosom?—Why must every wind conspire to unveil new beauties to his sight,

fight, and why too must that cunning painter, exercise, heighten the bright carnation of your cheeks to such a dazzling hue, that the admiring eye could not behold its lustre, without betraying the emotions of the heart? Is this fair dealing, tempter? Goddeffes, ye should have mercy, and remember that my hero is but a mortal.

CHAPTER III.

Our Hero is led towards a Discovery highly interesting.

WE left our hero, at the close of the foregoing chapter, like the son of Tydeus in the fields of Troy, contending with the immortals: if in that encounter any lady got a wound of Henry's giving, we, who must be tried by modern rules of honour, not by ancient lore, will be the last to boast of it; certain it is, that Isabella stepped into the carriage, and took her seat there, with an agility that argued the free use of all her limbs; neither did she fly to her father, as her fair prototype Venus did to Jupiter, to murmur and com-

plain of the audacious mortal who assailed her; on the contrary, she parted with him in peace, caressed the favourite steed on which he rode, and, as she mounted the chariot, accepted his assisting hand; from all which we infer, that Isabella came heart-whole out of the fray. or, at worst, with no such visible injury as could impeach the manhood of our hero. He, on the other hand, whether disabled by some secret wound, or from whatever cause, attempted not to vault into the saddle with his usual glee, but slowly pacing under shelter of the trees with horse in hand, unfolded the small packet Isabella had delivered to him, and taking out the contents, which Zachary's carelessness had neglected to give, read as follows—

“Accept this ring: it was my gift to your father; the pledge of love and constancy: the person, who pretends to have found it, either is Delapoer himself, or can inform you of his fate.”

“’Tis Delapoer himself,” cried Henry; “’tis he! How cruel is this disappointment! How perverse, vexatious, and unpardonable the negligence of Zachary! and what fatal consequences might have follow’d from our altercation

tercation

tercation in the cottage! Heaven and Earth!
I might have been the murderer of my father!
my blood chills at the reflection! Three times
I have met him, and each time, save once,
have treated him with fullen disrespect. O
Nature, where were those secret workings we
are told of; where that sympathy of souls,
that instinct, to impel us to each other? 'Tis
plain why he disguised himself; he came to
spy the land, to hover round the spot, where
his first love was planted: he knew the ru-
mour of Lord Crowbery's jealousy; nay, he
confess'd he did, and (oh strange involution
of unnatural circumstances!) accused me in
his heart of incest with a mother. Monstrous
perversion of ideas! by what horrors have I
been unknowingly encompass'd! by what pro-
vidence have I escap'd! He must be Delapoer;
he must be the unconscious author of my mys-
terious birth. Where shall I seek him now?
No matter! I will ransack the whole island
ere I renounce the search. He said he was a
gentleman; 'twas truly said! for when I rous'd
him into wrath, his pale and sickly cheeks
caught fire, and his eyes witness'd to the high-
born spirit of a noble gentleman. Thank

Heaven! we parted not in anger, but in peace."

Thus venting his sad thoughts aloud, he fauntered towards the house; and, there arrived, betook himself to his chamber, deposited the sacred pledge securely, and was summoned from his meditations to the task of dress by the tolling of the bell, which solemnly announced the arrival of a numerous party of visitors to the hospitable house of Manstock: these visitors, who were of the first respect in the county, came uninvited; but though Sir Roger's liberal stile of furnishing his board defied surprize, his table was not proof against their numbers, so that Henry, who was late in his appearance, shaped his course aside from the main body, and attached himself to a supplemental table, where sate a young officer in a captain's naval uniform, whose open countenance and easy manners soon unlocked restraint, and put both parties at their mutual ease.

" Jack," cried Sir Roger, addressing himself to the Captain, " that gentleman is a friend of mine, I recommend him to your care, and you to his; I pray you waste no ceremony in
being

being known to each other.”—“ Enough said, uncle,” quoth the Captain, and tendered his hand to Henry.

Gallant, congenial hearts, how quick ye harmonise and are attuned together !

This officer, Cary by name, was nephew to Sir Roger, and youngest of five sons, which his sister had borne to Sir Nicholas Cary, deceased. He was in person short, but of athletic mould, hard favoured in his features, which, though they could boast no beauty, made ample compensation by a strong display of candour and benevolence ; they needed not a herald to proclaim—“ this is an honest, “ brave, well tempered man ; him you may “ trust without a pledge, and take into your “ heart without a trial.”—He was a prime favourite with his uncle, of which he had received many unequivocal proofs at times when pay run short, and prize money did not come in ; and this very day had greeted his eyes with the Baronet’s name at the foot of an order for an hundred pounds, together with an excellent time-keeper, presented to him by the fair hands of his cousin Isabella, which Claypole, who was a great martinette in things of that sort, had procured for her in London for
this

this very purpose. Captain Cary had lately been made post into a frigate, as a reward for his gallant behaviour in an action with the enemy, when he had command of a cutter; in this frigate he was now hovering upon the eastern coast for the purpose of collecting some prest men to complete his complement. His presence spread joy through the whole family; every one of the old servants, in their turns, made an errand to the side table, which was soon overloaded with their offerings, for none came empty handed, and it had been a vain attempt to think of checking their good will; none went away without a kind word; and in all these manœuvres Henry discovered such a flow of heart on both sides, that before many minutes had gone by, he and Cary had hatched a friendship for each other, which some bosoms would have taken as many years to brood upon without the same effect.

"I am going to sea in a whiff," said Cary to our hero; "but I was determin'd to snap a fight of my uncle and Isabella, if it was in my power, and consistent with the service: I have now brought my ship to an anchor, by order of my superiors, and shall be off to-morrow by peep of day."—Henry asked how
long

long it would be before he left the coast, and how far off his station was?—Two hours smart riding might carry him to it, and in five or six days, at most, he expected to take his departure.—“ I know,” added he, “ that my destination is to Lisbon; ’tis a pleasant trip, and if you have a mind to volunteer with me so far, I’ll give you the best welcome that my accommodations admit of, and thank you for your company.”

An opportunity so tempting, and a companion so much to Henry’s taste, were not to be slighted: it accorded so critically with the project he had in mind, and so fully met his wishes, that he told Cary in a whisper, he would talk with him farther upon it in another place; and if a certain event came to pass as he expected, he should most thankfully embrace his kind proposal, and esteem himself happy in carrying a musquet on his quarter deck, under so gallant a commander. Henry, for reasons best known to himself, spoke this in so low a voice, that it may be presumed he wished it not to be overheard at the other table: whether it was or was not, time, perhaps, may shew; but there was a glance just then directed towards him from a certain person who there presided, which

which had a great deal of tender intelligence in its expression, and, we are apt to believe, though it sounds paradoxical to say it, that the sensation it created in him was at once both pleasurable and painful.

There was another person at table, though at some distance from the sender of the glance in question, who was not idle or indifferent in the intimations, which her eyes occasionally condescended to bestow upon our hero. This was none other than Fanny Claypole herself, the niece of Sir Roger's reverend friend, and whom, as the reader may probably recollect, the worthy Baronet had charactered as an accurate observer of beauty in the male sex, and not unkindly disposed, as it now seemed, towards Henry, who possessed it in such high perfection. She was seated between her uncle and Sir Roger, but to the attention she paid to either of them, or to any thing passing round or upon the table, she might as well have been in another planet. Henry had all her notices, and nobody any share of her conversation. Her particular location as a spectatress of what was to her so interesting a phænomenon was as happy as good fortune could make it, for there was nothing to cut the line of vision between

tween her eyes and the object they were engaged upon, and those eyes, which were truly very communicative, sent such plain-speaking messages every now and then, that Henry must have been duller than *the fat weed on Lethe's brink* not to have read their meaning; even Cary himself, who was not over-critical in this kind of language, wanted not the help of his sea-glasses to spy it out—"Look to," he cried, whispering Henry in the ear, "by the lord, volunteer, there's a signal out for you to come on board the Fanny sloop of war: launch away, my brave fellow, for you'll have warm work when the decks are clear'd."

Henry smiled, and said nothing; but the prediction was not a whit the less true for his disregard of it; for no sooner was the cloth removed, and grace pronounced by the Reverend Mr. Claypole, than Fanny began her manœuvres, and having introduced a chair between herself and uncle, she beckoned Henry to her, and with a hitch that edged Mr. Claypole considerably out of the line, brought her prize close alongside of her, to the infinite delight of Cary, who calmly seated himself in a more envied place, beside his cousin Isabella.

Next

Next to absolute privacy, nothing is so favourable to a determined tête-à-tête as a large company; Fanny seemed aware of this, for she devoted her regards entirely to her next neighbour. She possessed in a very eminent degree those graces and qualifications, which are more properly styled allurements than beauties, and attract more lovers than they fix; she had besides the art of arranging her forces in the best way possible for her own purposes, and suffering none to be idle in her service, made up by discipline what she wanted in numbers; she might, however, be fairly called a very pretty woman, dressed with a becoming negligence, and talked with a familiar ease; with a ready flow of words ever at command, she had a vivacity that might pass for wit, and a raillery that resembled humour; she was quick to apprehend all meanings that a word could carry, and not afraid to shew, that she both apprehended and applied them; she was, in short, an admirable actress, and never more so than when she affected to look modest and demure.

It was not the habit of Sir Roger's house for the ladies to sit long after dinner, and as Isabella naturally concluded that the gentlemen

men now present had come upon county business, she was the quicker in her motions, and, to the sensible regret of Fanny Claypole, broke up the female part of the assembly, and left the stage entire to the lords of the creation.

CHAPTER IV.

County Politics debated over a Bottle.

WHAT Isabella had surmised was true: one of the county members lay at the point of death, and Sir Roger's visitors, who were the leading men of the opposite parties, had united in referring themselves to the worthy Baronet as a middle man, and acceptable to both, for the sake of preserving peace in the county, and preventing a contest, which, from the state and temper of parties, seemed to be inevitable, unless he could be prevailed upon to step in upon the vacancy. This had been so often tried before, and his aversion from the undertaking was so well known, that though they came upon him in great strength, and as it were by surprize, yet they rather laid

laid their account for a hard-fought battle than an easy victory.

One of their junto, an elderly gentleman, and much respected, was Sir Roger's particular friend; he was accordingly put forward as their spokesman in the opening of this business; he acquitted himself of the task in a manner that did credit to their choice; he appealed to those passions, in which he knew his friend was most assailable, the spirit of patriotism, and the pride of being marked as the preserver of the public peace. Sir Roger, in plain words and few, made his hearty acknowledgments for the great honour conferr'd upon him, candidly stated his unsuitness for the office to which they invited him, and humbly solicited to be excused from undertaking it—"My age," said the good man, "my habits of life, my attachment to the quiet character of a country gentleman, disqualify me for the active duties you would lay upon me. I love my country, it is true, and, in my small sphere, do all the good I can amongst my neighbours, but in the politics of the state I am as ignorant as a child."—"For that reason we appeal to you," said one of the gentlemen, who was of an opposite interest to the last speaker; "to your honour and impartial

tial judgment, unconnected with party, and unbiass'd by politics, we would fain delegate this important trust, and in your nomination only all voices will unite; you alone can keep us all in harmony and good fellowship, and, I flatter myself that Sir Roger Manstock, as a lover of peace, will not refuse to his friends and neighbours their conciliating petition, tho' it may be at the expence of some small share of his repose."

Sir Roger said truly he was no adept in politics, neither was he versed in shifts and evasions, which we take to be an inferior branch of the same science; where his conscience, as in the present case, could not stand by him, wit never came to his assistance; in short, he was a good man and a bad orator; these arguments, therefore, which pushed right forwards at his heart he could not parry, and whilst he was thus balancing the pro and the con in silence, Cary, who saw the conflict, and which side his honour ought to take, filled his glass, and cried aloud—"Come, uncle, let us drink, 'Peace at home and victory abroad;' if you'll preserve the one, we'll struggle to obtain the other." This lucky start of gaiety was pledged by all present, and Sir Roger seemed to be carrying

carrying his election very fast against his will; one hope only remained, and that was centered in his friend Mr. Claypole, who hitherto had sat, with a neutrality of countenance, in perfect silence. He was a cool, deep-thinking man, and one on whose opinions Sir Roger reposed a very catholic faith; when he found himself invited to speak by a certain look, which his friend in doubt directed to him, and saw all other eyes upon him at the same time, and evidently with the same expectations, he delivered himself with much gravity, as follows:—

“ I am so inconsiderable a person in this company, and have so little right to speak upon the point in question, that I should naturally have been silent, had not my respected friend signified to me by his looks that my poor opinion would not be unwelcome or impertinent; I say, gentlemen, I should be without excuse for uttering a word on this subject, but for Sir Roger’s wish that I should do so, and your encouragement in giving ear to me; I shall not, however, abuse your indulgence by going out of my line, which certainly has nothing to do with parliamentary matters, but shall simply submit to my friend’s consideration what my conscience obliges me to recommend

as a minister of peace, and a well wisher to the good order of society. The monstrous excesses and gross enormities of a contested election are seriously to be deplor'd, and every worthy means for preventing them have my hearty concurrence; how then can I withhold my approbation from the means now proposed, which, having for their object a person so worthy, cannot fail to be worthy in themselves? It has been my happiness to live in the closest intimacy with my friend here present for many years, and, if Heaven sees fit to add others to them, I pray that it may continue to me that blessing also; I can boast therefore that I know him well; but what of that; you know him also, as your present application testifies, and know him pre-eminently deserving of the honours you would fain confer upon him: I therefore join my humble suit to your's, that he would be pleased to accept them; and this I do, not unconscious of the sacrifice he must make of many comforts, nor even indifferent to the loss which I myself must suffer by his absence, because I cannot bring myself to put the sacrifice of any one man's peace, least of all the sacrifice of my own, into the balance against the peace of many."

The

The reverend speaker ceased, and Sir Roger had no more to do but to signify his assent, and take up his burthen with the best grace he could. The victory was complete, and the glass began to circulate to the health of the Baronet; Captain Cary was in the chair, and the very soul of good fellowship; the wine was excellent, the company in high good humour, and Sir Roger's courage began to rally; he had now his joke at his nephew Jack, and a whisper for Henry at his elbow, which intimated to him, that his prediction about Fanny was in a fair course to be made good; in short, there was no one present who did not seem to sympathise in the festivity of the moment.

When the gentlemen negotiators were three parts tipsey, and their servants entirely so, they set out, at the risque of their necks, towards their respective homes. Henry and the Captain joined the ladies in the drawing-room, whilst Sir Roger, according to custom, exercised himself with a walk up and down the great hall with his friend Claypole: though a man in general of few words, he was just now in a talking vein, and having gently tapped the parson on the shoulder as if to bespeak attention, he began as follows:—

“ Well,

“ Well, my good friend, these gentlemen have carried their point, with your assistance, and I am in a fair train to find myself, where I never expected to be found, a mute member in the British senate, and the unworthy representative of this great country. Pr’ythee, Claypole, what do’st think that I can do in that place? a pretty figure I shall make; a mere country putt, amongst wits, lawyers, orators and politicians. I may perhaps be able to say aye or no, but good chance if I do not say it, like Sir Francis Wronghead, sometimes in the wrong place.”

“ No fear of that,” quoth Claypole; “ if all were speakers that sit in parliament, our House of Commons would be a mere club of spouters. The assent or dissent of an honest and right-judging country gentleman will never be a matter of indifference.”

“ Why, truly,” said the Baronet, “ speech-making has not been in vogue with my family for many years past; not but there have been those heretofore who could do it, and roundly too; we have a record of my ancestor Sir Thomas Manstock, in 1566, making a flaming speech in the Commons to constrain Queen Bess to marry or appoint a successor;

he was a bold man, and call'd her a faint hearted woman in the face of the House, for which by the way, she tweak'd his nose in the face of the Court, and call'd him cuckold. It was scurvy treatment, and, I am apt to think, gave the orator a surfeit, that has run in the blood ever since ; for all our generations in descent from Sir Thomas have been as mute as fishes to the present day."

" Well, Sir Roger," said Claypole, " there have been times since those of Elizabeth, when taciturnity was a good family qualification, and that same royal tweak of the nose may have been the means of keeping some heads upon their shoulders: after all, it must be own'd, it was a rough way her Majesty took of snubbing the good man Sir Thomas, and what few old maids in the like case wou'd have done ; but match-making for crown'd heads is a ticklish business,"—" For any heads," added, Sir Roger ; " and tho' a matter of that sort may, for aught I know, be going on at this very moment under our noses, I shall keep mine at least out of danger, as I shou'd be loth to have it tweak'd, even by the fair fingers of Fanny Claypole."

; This was a hit that Claypole had not quite given

given his friend credit for, and it was at least a proof to him that his own remarks had not been singular; for he argued rightly enough, that if Sir Roger had spied it out, nobody could have overlook'd it; he thought it best therefore to treat it in the same strain, between jest and earnest, and observed in reply, that Fanny was a free-hearted girl, and her own mistress.—“She is out of my hands,” said he; “so shou’d not I be out of her’s with a whole skin, if I was to play the part of Sir Thomas Manstock, and dictate to her on the subject of matrimony. Henry is a fine fellow, it must be confess’d, and it is no impeachment to her taste that she likes him; if, therefore, she is resolv’d to make him a present of fifteen thousand pounds and her fair person, much good may it do him; I can’t gainsay it.”—“And if it was to come to that,” said Sir Roger, “it might not, perhaps, be the very worst thing she could do: I have a very high opinion of Henry, and tho’ we are in the dark about his parents, I would risque a wager that my niece Crowbery knows him to be a very honest man’s son, and one for whose memory she has a great regard; and as a proof of it, friend Claypole, I can tell you in confidence, that Henry will be well provided for at

her decease ; but he has a high proud spirit of his own, and it must be Fanny's charms, not her money, that will weigh with him."

Claypole was a man that looked to the main chance, and not a word of this was lost upon him : his eyes had not been idle, whilst Fanny's were employed with Henry ; he knew her well, and had had a painful trust whilst she had been under his guardianship ; he saw her daily in danger of being made the prey of the first lightly knave that laid his traps for her ; he had as high an opinion of our young hero as Sir Roger himself had, and was in the same persuasion, as to his being the son of Ratcliffe, believing also that he was in a fair train shortly to become his nephew, he was by no means sorry to hear of Lady Crowbery's intentions in his favour. Upon these grounds he not only became reconciled to the necessity he was under of leaving his niece to her own choice, but was secretly disposed to further the connection by all the means in his power : all these thoughts he kept to himself, and quietly followed his friend Sir Roger to the drawing-room.

CHAPTER V.

Fresh Mischief in Meditation against our Hero.

WHEN Sir Roger and his friend entered the apartment of the ladies, they found the young people distributed into pairs; Cary in high talk, and sitting by his cousin; Henry in no talk at all, but fairly pounded in a corner of the room by the manœuvre of Fanny Claypole, who was so posted as to cut him off from all chance of an escape: she had seated herself in a chair with her back to one side of the room and her knees to the other, so as to form the exact hypotheneuse of a triangle, and Henry in the area of it. There were many fortunate circumstances concurring with the position she had taken to favour her operations; the size of the room was enormous, and the little share of light, that only two candles could have bestowed upon her at that distance, she fairly intercepted by sitting with her back to them, and suffering no one ray to fall upon the person of her prisoner; he also was not the less attuned to her purpose, for being somewhat flustered by

the many toasts he was obliged to pledge by Cary's strict attention to discipline, which he took care to exact with the utmost impartiality towards all under his command, unless he could be said to favour Henry as a volunteer, by thrusting him into the thickest of the fire. To this circumstance only it was owing, that our hero, contrary to his natural good breeding, suffered himself to be so long detached from the rest of the company.

Something or other had discomposed Isabella's spirits, and all Cary's efforts could not rally them. The presence of her father was a relief to her, and, upon his entrance, Henry started from his corner, and joined the circle; Claypole placed himself next to him, and drew him into talk about Blachford and his trepan, Henry, with a good deal of humour, related Ezekiel's account of that gentleman's state of conscience, and his mode of comforting him on the bed of sickness. Claypole observed upon this with some degree of asperity, and hinted, that he should consider Ezekiel as a dangerous enthusiast amongst his parishioners. This led Henry to speak of him in a more serious stile, and to give such a delineation of his character as turned all hearts in his favour, especially

especially that soft charitable heart, which Isabella wore in her bosom.—“ I should do him injustice,” said Henry, “ if I were only to bring forward his oddities, and keep his virtues out of sight; I acknowledge that my friend, in some instances, has a super-abundance of zeal; but it is not that zeal, without knowledge or discernment, which would betray him to intrude where there is no call for his services; he is only a shepherd to the stragglers of the flock; at Crowbery he had full employ, here he will find none.”—“ I hear,” said the divine, “ he has been preaching out of trees.”—“ I don’t doubt it,” replied Henry, “ and to the trees if he thought it would edify a single leaf upon their branches.”—“ And is it true,” resumed the said divine, “ that he address’d a funeral sermon at the foot of the gibbet to the effigy of justice Blachford?”—“ Perfectly true,” quoth Henry, “ and I honour him for it, for his heart was right, tho’ the mistake was otherwise ridiculous enough.”—“ I perceive he is a favourite of your’s,” repeated Claypole.—“ And with me a very great one,” said Isabella, with some quickness.—Claypole said no more.

When Cary understood, from Henry’s discourse,

course, that he had been living in the same cottage with Ezekiel, it struck him that he must be the very person, who had been represented to him by Captain Crowbery as an idler and a vagrant, proper to be pressed into his ship, and upon a fuller explanation of what had passed on that occasion, there was no doubt that he conjectured rightly. This was a new discovery of another plot, unknown to Henry, though not unnoticed by this history, which that base junto, of which Lord Crowbery was the head, had contrived against him. His countenance upon the developement underwent a change, that shewed the struggle he had within himself to repress the angry emotions of his mind; nevertheless, he commanded himself before the ladies, and simply enquired of Cary if he was acquainted with Captain Crowbery: the answer was, that he had served in the same ship with him some years ago, when he himself was a youngster and Crowbery a lieutenant of marines.—“ I shall find an opportunity, perhaps,” said Henry, “ to convince the gentleman that I want no pressing into a ship, when I can have the honour of fighting under the eye of so gallant a commander.” This was at best equivocal, and Isabella turned pale.

—“ My

—“ My quarter-deck is at your service,” cried Cary, “ and, if occasion calls upon me, I will do my best to preserve the good opinion you conceive of me.” This made matters not a whit the better in Isabella’s sense of them.—“ Don’t talk of fighting,” cried Fanny Claypole, who had stolen a glance at Isabella, “ for if you do, some of us will faint ; look, if you have not already turn’d Miss Manstock as pale as a lilly.” The remark was true, but cruelly ill-timed ; Isabella’s countenance suddenly changed to the other extreme, and was scarlet with blushes. Henry bit his lips with rage, but had the prudence to keep silence ; Claypole gave his niece a reprimanding frown, but to no purpose.—“ I dare say,” added she, “ Mr. Henry is too wise to put himself into any post of danger, where it is not his duty to be.”—“ Pardon me,” said Cary, with a kind design to turn the attention of the company from Isabella, “ that does not appear, for I think I have just now seen my friend in a post of the greatest danger, and I am mistaken if it was duty, and not choice, that brought him there.” This folly brought all parties home ; Fanny tittered, but seemed rather piqued that Henry had no speech upon the occasion : Isabella in the mean

time recovered so far as to glance a momentary look of approbation at our silent hero, which said to him—but where is the commentator that will help me to a construction of what it said, in words that will not debase the sense of the original? It is enough that Henry understood it.

Hearts easily impressed with sudden passions are generally communicative; Fanny Claypole's was of this sort; prone to love at first sight, and not in the practice of suppressing her emotions, she had given Henry pretty clearly to understand that he was not indifferent to her. This she contrived to convey to him, during their conference in the corner, through the channel of more senses than one, and though they were not all just then in the clearest state of apprehension, none were so disabled as to lose their functions. The fondness of a fine woman never can, nor ever ought to be treated with indifference and contempt; neither was it in the present instance. This gallantry, so indispensable on the part of Henry, confirmed her in the full persuasion, that the impression was reciprocal, so that when her uncle afterwards took occasion, as they were passing to the supper room, civilly to submit to her in a whisper,
if

if she was not a little too particular with a new acquaintance, she answered him in the true spirit of independence, that he need not concern himself about appearances, she and her new acquaintance, as he called him, perfectly understood each other. This, though something more than she was warranted to say, was no more than she thought prudent to assert, by way of check to any objections, which she was prepared to expect from that cautious quarter. For Isabella she had another language; from her she expected no opposition, and dreaded no rivalry; but there was an innate delicacy of character in that amiable young lady, which made it necessary for Fanny to conform to it, in appearances at least, and she was sensible that the levity of her behaviour stood in need of some softening and apology, for she had not been so totally engrossed by her own pursuits, as not to perceive that Isabella did not entirely approve her proceedings in the corner. She followed her therefore into her dressing room, when they retired for the night, and as soon as Susan was sent away, the ensuing conversation took place:—"I can see by your looks," said Fanny "that I am out of favour with you; you think

I have behav'd like a fool, and expos'd myself, I know you do ; but, dear sweet soul, don't turn that grave countenance upon me, but hear, and pity me, and be my friend. I confess to you, I never was so taken by surprise in all my life. I know what young men in general are, and how cautious we ought to be in our behaviour towards them ; but you never told me that I was to behold what I did not believe was in nature, and so my poor heart, being caught in an unguarded moment, and not being made of either flint or steel, cou'd not stand the shock, but, alas, for me ! was overthrown in the end ; not at first, do you mark me ; for, handsome as he is, if he had been only that, I could have look'd upon him as one does upon a picture, and thought no more about him ; but the misfortune is, he is so irresistibly engaging withal, that it requires either more insensibility, or more hypocrisy than I am mistress of, to prevent his finding out how agreeable he is to me : now I dare say you see him with other eyes than I do, and think all this very silly, and perhaps it is not very wise ; but upon my life, my dear, I find it very natural."

" Whether I see Henry exactly with the same eyes that you do," replied Isabella, " is more

more than I can answer for; but if it is on the goodness of his character that you found your regard for him, we certainly do not differ in opinion as to that.”—“ Oh, you chilling creature!” exclaimed Fanny, with an affected kind of shriek; “ that is so like you, so guarded, and so precise: the goodness of his character indeed! why ’tis an expression for an attorney; and then, my regard for him truly! there’s a freezing word! regard for such a man as Henry! I much doubt if I have any such sensation belonging to me; ’tis a mere icicle compar’d to what I feel. Pray, my dear Isabella, let me ask you one plain question, and honestly resolve me, if you do not think him positively and without compare the finest young fellow in creation?”

The lovely Isabella paused upon this question; she drew up, and with a somewhat stronger tint of the rose in her cheeks than was natural to her, said—“ I never think or speak in such a rapturous strain of any man, neither do I call them familiarly fellows; it may be the fashionable name for them, but I have not yet brought my lips to the style of it.”—“ In your own style then,” replied Fanny, “ and without any trespass on the purity of your immaculate

maculate expressions, tell me, if you please, whether you consider a tender sentiment for a young man like Henry as a violation of the laws of modesty, as a sin against the delicacy of the sex; but understand me rightly, I do not put the case as applying to you but to myself." — "That's a little hard, methinks," said Isabella, "to put a question of conscience to me, that does not respect myself. If I was apt to talk of other people's conduct you might have a just excuse for tying me down to my words, but as I promise you I shall in no time to come pass a censure on your actions, I think, dear Fanny, I may be excus'd from pronouncing upon them before hand."

"Well," answer'd she, "you are always too wise for me; and yet I am persuaded, if you saw me in any danger, you have too much good nature not to guard me against it. If man was such a monster as some old maids make him to be, you, who are far enough out of his reach, wou'd not suffer me to be devour'd by him. If Love be not harmless, why do they describe him as a child?" — "When I have been taught Love's catechism," quoth Isabella, "I may be able to answer your question; at present I know nothing about it; but

but I shou'd guess, if you was to apply to Henry, he wou'd be much more likely to satisfy your enquiries than I am."—" I believe you, on my conscience," said Fanny, looking archly as she spoke; " Henry is likely enough to tell me how harmless love is; but question may lead to question, and in the end he may be found to preach one thing and practise another."

To this the fair moralist gravely answered—" Never, Fanny, will Henry, or any other man of honour, lose his respect whilst you preserve your dignity. How he might treat questions of so frivolous a sort, and flippancies so profest, as I never prov'd him with any thing of the kind, so I cannot answer for him in the case; certain it is, that if a woman is not secure in herself, no man shou'd be trusted by her; for my own part, I have walk'd and convers'd with Henry at all hours, and in all places, without fear or reserve."—" Oh Heavens!" exclaimed Fanny, " and you survive it! well, but in the first place you are not in love with him, that is out of all doubt; nature seems to have exempted you from that weakness; and the insurmountable barrier which your rank and fortune oppose to ambition

tion on his part, was he dispos'd to entertain it, throws him at such a distance, that he can only regard you with an awful respect. You are the heiress of Sir Roger Manstock ; Henry is, the Lord knows who ; you have a beloved father, for whose sake it is well known you have rejected, and wou'd again reject, suitors of the best pretensions ; this young man, obscure, unknown even to himself, and without pretensions, must of consequence be without hope, and where there is no hope, my dear Isabella, you know there can be no spirit for enterprize, nay, I shou'd think impossibilities can scarce provoke desire ; so that at all events you are out of danger, and being immoveable in your own resolutions, have nothing to fear either from Henry or yourself."

Whilst Fanny reasoned in this manner, it was as much as Isabella's politeness could do to attend with patience the conclusion of her argument, upon the very first pause she interposed by replying,—“ When you labour to convince me that I am in no danger with a person of Henry's sort, you do but argue to assure me, that when the sun gives his light I am not in the dark ; but when you wou'd assign other causes of my security, than what
are

are to be found simply in his honour, your argument becomes more ingenious than solid, because there needs not more than one good and sufficient reason for any one thing. As for that awful respect, which you ascribe to him, as applicable to my rank and fortune compar'd with his own, believe me, Fanny, I am not likely to exact, nor he to pay it, on that account; if he gives as much as my behaviour merits, be assur'd he adds nothing on the score of those worldly advantages fortune has for the present thrown into my scale, and which she may have in reserve for his in an equal or superior degree; I desire, therefore, to be understood as owing no security to those insurmountable barriers, which you fancy you discover between us, but which are as imaginary as the exemption that you flatter me with supposing I enjoy by nature from the common weaknesses of my sex, or the resolution you credit me for having fix'd so immoveably against all suitors, because I have declin'd the tenders of some. If there is an imputation that wou'd wound me deeper even than the charge of levity and coquetry, it is that of being thought a proud despiser of those beneath

neath my level, and insensible of soul to merit in an humble state of fortune. When I have said this in justification of myself, we will leave the subject where it is, observing only, that if you, being your own mistress in all respects, are serious in this attachment, and can engage the heart of a man so truly amiable and so strictly honourable, you will be the happiest of women; and if some few may condemn you for your disinterestedness, there will be many more to envy you for your good fortune.”—

“Well then, my dear Isabella,” said Fanny, in conclusion, “if I was resolutely to marry this young unknown, you wou’d not think me quite run man?”—“Upon my word,” replied she, “I will not flatter you so far as to say I shou’d.”—“Then I will go and consult my pillow on the matter,” said Fanny, “and so good night to you!”

CHAPTER VI.

Love is a subtle Arguer.

WE who are historians of fiction have a privilege that historians of fact do not enjoy, which, like the ring of Gyges, gives us the power of invisibility, by which we insinuate ourselves most completely into the secrets of our heroes and heroines, and instead of arguing, as our unendowed brethren do, from records and authorities, up to the thoughts and characters of our actors, which at best is but an uncertain kind of guess-work, we can go point-blank to their hearts, in spite of all the obliquities of words and actions, and give to our readers the idea in embryo before it has been brought to the birth, or ever mounted to the lips. In virtue of this privilege I shall let Fanny Claypole go, as her meditations may easily be guessed at, and remain with the lovely Isabella, whose thoughts are probably more deep, and undoubtedly more interesting.

As soon as she was alone, she began to take a strict review of what had been her state of mind

mind and temper during the foregoing scene: the first reflection that occurred to her was of the self-accusing sort; she had acted with duplicity.—“Have I not permitted Fanny to conclude that Henry is indifferent to me? and is he?”—To this her heart replied that he was not. Her next reproach was for the coldness and reserve with which she had met the warmth of Fanny’s friendly confidence;—“I hate myself for that,” she said; “it looks so like what I detest and disavow, pride and disdain.”—Here she paused, and began to call over, as near as memory enabled her, the very words she had used in her past discourse with her friend. Her faults did not appear so glaring upon this review; her silence with respect to Henry did not strike her as so direct a breach of that frank sincerity which was her nature; she did not see the obligation she was under to make discovery of impressions, the reality of which she was not yet assured of: why should Fanny’s levity, who said every thing at random that was uppermost in her thoughts, draw her into the like idle vein of talking?—“If she will pronounce upon my insensibility, it is not I that lead her into the mistake, nor am I sure it was my business to lead her out of

of it."—She now commenced a stricter examination of her heart, inspected it with a severer eye, and found, or thought she found, some cause to suspect it of jealousy, a baneful passion.—“ Oh horrible !” she cried, “ what’s this that I discover ? this pang I never felt before ! this disposition to repine and murmur at another’s happiness ! Hateful propensity ! I’ll banish it at once ; it makes me mean and loathsome to myself. Why cou’d not I be well content when she was pleased ? why sigh and vex myself, and love her less than ever I did before, because she sat with Henry, and engross’d him to herself ? I’ll call her back, and tell her I admire her generous, her disinterested passion ; nay, I’ll do no more, I’ll go and be her advocate with him she loves ; that will be noble, that will be a gallant conquest over myself ; and she deserves him, she will marry him ; she has the happy privilege of chusing for herself ; I am—Alas ! I know not what I am ; but this I know, I am not quite so desperate and romantic as to sacrifice myself, and be officious in her cause, and so, perhaps, give Henry just offence, and yet do her no service : no, that won’t do ; I am not bound to go so far as that, nay, I am sensible I cannot : alas !
alas ?

alas! I but deceive myself; the more I look into myself the more dissatisfied I am with what I see: I find my heart incapable of generosity; it is not what it was. I will not injure Fanny, or betray her, but I perceive I cannot be her friend."

Ah Isabella! dear ingenuous girl, you see the point which honour fain would reach, but do not see the interposing passion that diverts it from his course. This night you must wear out in sleepless meditations; within the region of your heart there's one at work, whose innovating spirit never rests till it has perplexed the reason, overturned the peace, tampered with the loyalty, and shook the bosom's lord upon his throne. Love is that subtle dark incendiary, which unexperienced candour has no guard against: he wears a soft alluring smile, flatters in gentle whispers, woos you to pleasure, vexes you with no complaint, is social, gay, familiar, void of care; charmed by his artful approaches you admit him of your parties, make him your inmate, and lodge him in your bosom; then the turmoil begins, then all his specious qualities are seen no more; unsocial, murmuring, discontented, he begins to brood upon his schemes, shunning the face of man
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and day, renouncing food and sleep, hiding himself in dark and solitary places, till all is anarchy, misrule and madness, to the destruction both of heart and brain.

Ah Isabella ! dear ingenuous girl, there was a time when you would have entertained this openness of heart, this frank confession of your friend with heart as open, confidence as frank; you would have given her warm disinterested passion then a noble name, encouraged it with your applause, promoted it with all your power; but jealousy, that fierce and active partisan of love, will not permit these energies of native generosity to have their play; it is a monopolizing miser that will let no partner have an interest in that stake at which it singly grasps, and often, in the zeal of competition, overrates the prize which it would fain engross.— This probably was not its error in the case of Henry; but though the rivalry of Fanny could not easily give more than its true value to the object in dispute, yet, doubtless, it excited sensations in Isabella's bosom, which, had they not been stirred so roughly, might have enjoyed a longer calm; the passion, which she saw reflected from the fond eyes of Fanny, quickened her curiosity to scrutinize the engaging

gaging form on which those eyes were fixed; she followed them to the attracting point, and there she found enough to warrant all that rapture and delight with which they seemed inspired; she saw the art with which Fanny had posted herself, heard the murmur of her voice in soft and tender tones, and marked the animation of her action, her starts, and titterings, and coquetries, to all which she gave meaning and matter as her fancy dictated. This was the state of her mind, whilst Cary's railleries, once so entertaining, distracted her attention, and Fanny was enjoying her triumph, till her father's presence drew Henry from his corner, and dissolved the spell.

If the gentle Isabella, with a heart thus agitated, fell short in any degree of her wonted candour towards Fanny, either during her conversation with her, or in the course of her reflections that ensued upon it, let any who have experienced similar situations arraign her if they can.

"Dear Madam," cried Susan as she entered the room, "how pale you look! I hope nothing has happened to vex you."—"What shou'd vex me?" said Isabella, sighing as she asked the question.—"Nay, Madam," replied the

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the girl, "I can't pretend to say what shou'd vex you, unless it be that teasing miss who has held you so long from your repose, and who, they say, is so forward amongst the men, that I'm sure you can't approve of her goings on with Mr. Henry."—"Who tells you this?" said the mistress; "who are they that say she is forward with Mr. Henry?"—"Nay, Madam," replied the girl, "I don't know who says it in particular; every body says it that saw it; if I were to name names I shou'd pass for an informer, and I'm sure I shou'd be sorry to make mischief in the family, and stir up a combustion amongst my fellow-servants; if it offends you, Madam, I will have done."

"It does not offend me, Susan," said Isabella, looking graciously upon her, "nor need you have done on that account, as supposing what you say to me can possibly be repeated in this family. No doubt the servants, who waited at table, must have observed Miss Claypole's particularity; she was very unguarded to be sure."—"And very ridiculous, Madam, if I may say so," cried Susan, "for every body seems to think she can do herself no good by it, and that her schemes won't take with the young gentleman, who certainly did

not relish her behaviour, though he was too much of a man to turn his back upon her publicly; yet they tell me he look'd very cross at times, and that I'm sure is not natural to him: I dare say, Madam, you never saw him look cross in your days; for my part I can safely swear I never saw a frown upon his brow, though he has had enough to vex him, poor dear soul; therefore I'll forfeit my life if this lady has not done for herself; and if ever I come cleverly to the speech of him, I warrant me I'll get it all out, unless you are pleas'd to order otherwise, and see fit to forbid me."—"Why shou'd I do that?" Isabella replied, "since you will speak only for yourself, and not let him suppose that I can have any interest in the state of his heart towards Miss Claypole; in that, you know, I cannot possibly have the smallest concern, further than as mere matter of curiosity to hear how she stands with him; that is natural enough, you see, because, somehow or other, Susan, I have taken it strongly into my head, that Henry is not over-fond of forward girls."—Susan blushed from consciousness that the remark was just, to which she ingenuously gave testimony, saying, that she believed the world did

did not contain his like for honour towards the sex, and true modesty of nature.—“ I have reason to say it,” added she ; “ for love wou’d have made a fool of me, and something worse perhaps, but for his care and generous concern for me. Oh ! Madam, did you but know him as I do ; had you seen him in poverty and in sorrow ; how patient, how resign’d, of injuries how forgiving, in dangers how brave, in nature how benevolent ; oh ! Madam, you wou’d not wonder if a girl like me had lov’d him to distraction.”

“ Indeed, my good girl,” said the amiable Isabella, blushing as she spoke, “ there is all the reason in the world for loving him, and I do not wonder at you ; every body that knows him must love him.”—“ That’s what I say,” resumed she ; “ but lackaday ! as for this young madam that is so hot upon it, what is her love ? mere outside love ; the love of the eye ; that will never make its way with him ; I am certain that my Mr. Henry will never be her man, no, not if she had a thousand pounds where she has one.”—“ Indeed, Susan,” replied Isabella, “ I agree with you that fortune will never be Henry’s motive for making love ; and though Miss Claypole is a handsome girl,

I shou'd doubt if her manners are to his taste; nay, I own to you, it wou'd very much sink him in my opinion, was he to place his regards there; and I think I may venture to answer for him, that he will not."—"Answer for him!" cried Susan, "I will swear it, Madam: no, no; his heart is otherwise bestow'd, his affections are more worthily plac'd; and if ever he swerves from the lovely object he adores, to trifle and disgrace himself with that vain wanton flirting Miss Claypole, if ever he does that, I will, I will"—"Come, come, Susan," said Isabella, interposing, "there is no fear of him; I shou'd be forc'd to hate him if he did, and that wou'd make me wretched; but no more of this at present: get you to bed; we shall have a stormy night, and upon those occasions I always sit up till it is over."

CHAPTER VII.

The Hero of our History is brought to Shame.

THERE was a gallery in this quarter of the house, which had a communication with several of the apartments, and amongst others

others with that which Fanny Claypole occupied. Here she was met by Henry, as she was going to her chamber some time after her conference with Isabella. We confess it does not set off the gallantry of our hero, that he would fain have contented himself with civilly bidding her good night, and so have passed onwards to his bed-room, which also opened into the aforefaid gallery. There were other modes of disposing of time, to Fanny's mind in its present state, more grateful than that of devoting it to solitude and sleep. She contrived to hold him in parley some few minutes, and in that short space of time the storm foreseen by Isabella took place; the winds began to howl, the lightnings flashed, and the thunder rolled.

Fanny's gentle spirits instantly took alarm; her terrors deprived her of the power of stirring from the spot on which he stood; she clung close to Henry, clasping him with both arms, and seeming to supplicate protection in the most piteous manner. It was in vain he encouraged her to lay aside her fears, that the burst was over, and the storm had spent its fury; she was sure there would be more of it; she did not dare to move; and she implored

him not to leave her; thunder had always such an effect upon her, that it would throw her into fits if she had not somebody to support her, and as for her own servant, (whom he offered to call to her assistance) she was to the full as mere a coward as herself, and totally helpless. What could he do, but cheer the frightened fair one, who resorted to his courage for protection in this extremity? Another burst succeeded, the thunder louder and the flash more vivid. Fanny's arms now strained him closer than before; she dropt her head upon his neck, and hid her face; she shook in every limb, and murmuring cried—Support me, or I shall drop!—When the senses are possessed by fear, all reserve ceases; nay, even delicacy itself; we cling to the most loathsome object that gives us shelter from the face of danger. If Fanny's terrors were proportionable to the eagerness with which she embraced her supporter, they were strong indeed. Henry was not sorry to see a couch conveniently within reach, on which he could deposit his fair burthen, which now indeed was become a very pressing and importunate concern; her knees seemed sinking under her, and as she hung upon his neck with
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her whole weight, he began to think the fit she had predicted was actually upon her; he took her in his arms, and placed her carefully, and with all due delicacy, on the couch; as she still kept her hold upon him, of necessity he was drawn down upon the seat beside her.

The storm went on, the pitiless elements relaxed not of their fury, and poor affrighted Fanny, trembling more than ever, faintly whispered, sighing the whilst most movingly—
“Dearest of men, what will become of me? shelter me, I beseech you, from this scene of terror.”—As the flitting wheatear huddles herself under the turf whilst the gathering clouds hang threatening over her head, and cast a gloom upon the earth, so did the like timorous damsel, under the protection of her courageous defender, gazing on him with uplifted eyes that prayed for pity on her disconsolate condition, and encircling him in her arms, whilst she softly murmured—“Oh Henry! let the lightning strike me now; within your arms I die content.”

“Oh Henry!” honour also cried, “awake and be yourself! whither are you rushing? break from her hold; escape from her snares; they are spread for your destruction; the mo-

ment is on the wing that wafts you to perpetual disgrace. Rash, heated youth ! accursed power of wine, that thus inflames the blood and blinds the eye of reason : can you not see these terrors are but counterfeit, panders to passion ? the storm that you should dread is in your veins, not in the elements ; awake, and save yourself !”

What shall we say ? Must we break Nature’s mould, and fashion an imaginary hero of purer matter than of earthly clay, setting up a phantom of perfection, without speck or blemish, for enthusiastic ignorance to wonder at ? Is it to shew man as he is, or only as he ought to be, that we compose this history ? Surely as he is ; we make not men by working in our closets, but take them ready made from the world’s mighty warehouse, and present them as we found them ; therefore, as the hand of nature guides my pen, so do I write, and here consign my hero to as much disgrace as impurity in meditation, not in act, may in the judgment of my candid readers seem to merit : virtue had lost its hold upon his heart, honour’s appeal was silenced, and modesty had turned away her face from the suspicious scene, when in the very moment as he hovered

vered on the brink of ruin, a sudden scream from Isabella's chamber snatched him from his fate; her door flew open, and behold the very form of loveliness in fear's most striking attitude! Swift as the lightning's glance our hero started from the couch, shook off the embrace that bound him like a spell, and, deaf to Fanny's scream, flew to the rescue of the trembling Isabella.

Fear had not so far robbed her of her senses, but that she had sufficient faculties to note the situation of the parties, whom her presence had so critically broken in upon. Instant aversion seized her heart, and superseded the less urgent sense even of fear itself: she was at once indignant and composed; so that when Henry, in a faltering voice, begged to know what alarmed her, she turned disdainfully away, and in a tone that pierced him to the heart, bade him pay his attentions where they were more wanted and more welcome, then hastily returned into her chamber, and locked the door.

A long and dismal silence ensued between the parties in the gallery. Fanny remained seated on the couch, her dress disordered, her looks wild, and her attitude that of a Sybil in

her phrensy. Henry stood motionless, confounded, the very statue of despair and horror. —“ I am undone !” cried Fanny, “ Isabella has discovered us ; she has the eyes of a lynx, and nothing now remains to save me from disgrace and ruin, but boldly to join hands this moment, and defy the world.” —“ Miss Claypole,” said Henry, “ I hold myself in honour bound to make you every reparation that you can require ; I only wish you to consider, if the mode you point at is not desperate in the extreme : I am but what I am, and that is, nothing ; in this house I will not pass another day ; worlds would not tempt me to encounter the chaste eyes of that offended lady ; before you make so rash a sacrifice, therefore, recollect it is only to appearances you would make it, and that your conscience does not plead to facts, thank Heaven !” —“ Thank Heaven for what ?” she eagerly demanded ; “ not for the interruption that her jealousy occasion’d ; not for the shock that she has given to my tortur’d nerves ; it is not that I blush at what has pass’d, or any thing that might have pass’d, but only that she knows it. No, Henry, when I took you in my arms, I bound my heart to you by vows as sacred as if pledg’d before the altar ;
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favours bestow'd on you I never can regret; they are sanctify'd by honour; they are endearments snatch'd by opportunity from the cold lingering forms of law; the overflowings of a heart that doats upon you, whose pride it is to give you proofs of boundless confidence:—Here is my hand; take it, Henry, and with it take a husband's right in all that this fond heart and devoted person can bestow; we do but borrow a few hours from time."

"Not so," cried Henry, stepping back; not in this tumult of your mind will I avail myself of an extorted sacrifice, and take your hand. I do most resolutely bar the agreement till the event is seen. Mark what Miss Manstock does; our fate is in her hands alone; if by her means (which I am slow to suspect) the story gets abroad, and that your fame requires it, I shall be at hand; and here I solemnly engage my honour to come forth upon your summons, whether it be to confute falshood and exaggeration at the risk of my person, or to repair your injuries by marriage, if this you shall require; and from this promise no temptation, be it what it may, shall make me swerve."

With these words he departed, leaving her to bewail her disappointment, and murmur out

reproaches for his coldness, amidst tears, and sighs, and sleepless tossings in a solitary bed. As for his mind, it felt a stab in every thought; one fatal lapse had sunk him in his own esteem; and in the promise he had made to Fanny, every hope that could aspire to Isabella was for ever buried. Not daring to enquire the cause of her alarm, he conjectured that it must have been created by the storm, and saw, with some degree of consolation, that it now was past. Captain Cary was to return to his ship by the very first of the morning, and had kept his chaise and post-horses waiting for that purpose; and as immediate retreat from Manstock House was Henry's fixt resolve, the opportunity was fair for taking him and his baggage off at once, before the family was stirring. Their road fortunately laid through Crowbery, which was something more than half way; it was possible, therefore, that Cary's time might allow of a short call at Ezekiel's or Zachary's house, where some information might be gained of Lady's Crowbery's destination, and if that should turn out to be for Lisbon, all was so far well, if his new friend would stand to his offer of transporting him thither. It was necessary, however, to take a proper leave

leave of Sir Roger; and for this purpose he immediately wrote the following letter, addressed to that worthy personage:

“ Sir,

“ Impressed with a sense of your favours, which
 “ no time can obliterate, I beg leave to inform
 “ you, that I have embraced Captain Cary’s
 “ kind offer of a cruize, and hope you will
 “ consider it with your usual candour, both as
 “ an excuse for the abruptness of my departure,
 “ and a pardonable ambition to attach myself,
 “ though at humble distance, to the fortunes of
 “ so brave a commander.

“ I have the honour to be, Sir,

“ your most obliged,

“ and ever devoted Servant,

“ HENRY.”

CHAPTER VIII.

*A Visitor appears at Manstock House, who brings
 Intelligence of an unexpected Sort.*

THOUGH Cary’s chaise was ordered to the door by break of day, yet such of the domestics as had notice of it were ready waiting

ing to make tender of their services and farewells at his departure; to one of these Henry delivered his letter for Sir Roger, and from the same person he had the satisfaction to hear that Isabella's alarm, which proceeded from the sudden burst of one of her window shutters, shivered by a stroke of lightning, had passed off without any further ill consequences; but what was his surprize when he found himself accosted by his friend Susan May at this early hour, who drew him aside, and in a whisper eagerly demanded—"What in the name of madness can possess you to be running away from your good fortune at the very moment when my lovely mistress is dropping into your arms? Oh! if you had but heard what she said of you last night!"—"Tell it not to me," he exclaimed, "I have undone myself with her for ever!"—Then recollecting that he was on the point of betraying Fanny Claypole, he checked himself, and grasping both her hands in his—"Susan!" he cried, "I conjure you by the love you once had for me, never name me to your angelic mistress; I am going to shake off this loathsome existence, and my last breath will expire in prayers for her."—This said,

said, he turned away, and sprung into the chaise, where his companion was waiting for him.

And now, as we can well believe the better part of our readers are by this time become indifferent to the fate of our unworthy hero, we will leave him, without regret, to pursue his journey, and for the present confine our attention to the house of Manstock.

As soon as Fanny Claypole was drest, she presented herself at the door of Isabella's chamber, and was instantly admitted. Without any embarrassment, she began her enquiries as to the alarm she had suffered in the storm; and when that was explained, and the shattered window shutter referred to, Fanny, in her turn, undertook a plausible account of her being thrown into a fit by the violence of her fright, and of Henry's great attention in conveying her to the couch, and protecting her in her distress, with so much tenderness, that she verily believed she owed her life to his care.—“ I am sure,” added she, “ I shall never forget his kind assiduity so long as I live; and though I dare say my situation, stretch'd at my length, and helpless as I was, might appear to you a little equivocal, yet I can truly assert that the dear man was as delicate in his treatment of me as
if

if he had been one of our own sex."—"I promise you," replied Isabella, "I shou'd very unwillingly suppose to the contrary; only I cou'd wish, if you have any more fits, it may literally be one of our own sex, and not Mr. Henry, that will fetch you out of them."—"Humph!" said Fanny, "I assure you I shall not be ashamed to thank him before all the company, when I see him in the breakfast-room."—Upon this they separated.

Susan had been so observant of Henry's injunctions, that she had not named him to her mistress, and that young lady being equally silent, his departure was as much a secret to her as to Fanny. Isabella had passed a wretched night; her dread of meeting Henry was extreme; she gave little ear to Fanny's palliating account; and, with a mind agonized between love and resentment, she came trembling down the stairs; at the foot of them Susan was standing, her eyes drenched with tears, and a paper in her hand, that had just been delivered to her by the servant who generally attended upon Henry: Isabella demanded a sight of it, and before the girl had time to recollect herself, it was in her hands, and she read these words:

"Give

“ Give this inclosed trifle to your wor-
“ thy mother, being a small return of gra-
“ titude from that wretched creature, whom
“ her charity once harboured. You can need
“ nothing, being under the protection of an
“ angel. Farewel for ever !”

“ HENRY.”

The contents were a bank bill for twenty pounds.—“ Is he then gone !” cried Isabella,
“ gone for ever ! Oh my God !”—Then with
a sigh fell lifeless into Susan’s arms.

At that moment Sir Roger came out of
his dressing-room, and ran with agony to de-
mand what ailed his darling. Susan, with ad-
mirable presence of mind, slipped the letter out
of sight, and answered that her lady had been
extremely frightened by the storm, had passed a
sleepless night, and had fainted through mere
weakness and fatigue ;—“ But all will soon be
well,” said she ; “ you see she is recovering,”
(which was true) and then she recounted the
accident of the shutter in Isabella’s hearing,
to convince her that no discovery had been
made of any other cause. Sir Roger led his
daughter into his own apartment, and sent Su-
san for hartshorn and water. Isabella repeated
the

the account of her fright exactly as Susan had given it, and soon declared herself sufficiently recovered to attend upon the company at breakfast.—“ You will find our party,” said Sir Roger, “ has suffered a loss that I dare say you will regret as much as I do: my nephew Jack has stolen away our young Henry from us; here is his letter.”—This he delivered to Isabella, and she read what we have before recited. She returned it to him with a mournful look, and was silent; in truth she was not at that moment enough composed to venture an attempt at words.

“ My dear child,” cried Sir Roger, observing her turn paler than before, “ I hope you are not ill again.”—Isabella answered, that she was not quite recovered, but begged him not to be alarmed, for it would soon pass off.—“ I suspect,” said the good man, holding the letter in his hand, “ this will be bad news for Fanny Claypole, for she seems to be very fond of the young man, and if we bring it out upon her unawares it may create some confusion, and distress her. I think it will be better for me to whisper it to her uncle, and let him break it to her after we are out of the way; we may easily devise some excuse for

for his not being at breakfast. But does not this look like a pretence of Henry's for getting away from her? I suspect that Fanny has not play'd her cards well, and comes on rather faster than he approves of: I protest it seems to me to be all up with her, by the purport of this letter."—"I shou'd think a woman risques a great deal by such forward advances," replied Isabella; "but I suppose she knows her man, and probably they understand each other."—"Who so she told her uncle last night," said Sir Roger, "now you bring it to my recollection, and he believes that every thing goes on to her heart's content."—"I don't doubt it," cried Isabella.—"And I can assure you," added Sir Roger, "Claypole himself is very well inclin'd to the match."—"Then I dare say the match will take place," said Isabella, somewhat pettishly; "for Mr. Claypole is very apt to succeed in his undertakings; but let us not meddle with it, for I think it is no concern of ours."—This being concluded, they went into the breakfast room.

As the company were sitting down to the table, and before any notice had been taken of the absence of Henry, the porter's bell announced

nounced an arrival, and Mr. L—— was ushered into the room; he took his seat by Sir Roger, and all eyes were eagerly directed towards him, expecting, yet dreading, the result of his intelligence. He soon relieved their anxiety, by saying he had left Lady Crowbery preparing to undertake the journey he had advised; she was to set out the next day, and proceed by easy stages to London.—“ I have no doubt,” he said, “ that an English winter must by all means be avoided, and that Lisbon will be her ultimate destination; but as I shou’d be loth to take the sole responsibility of so valuable a life on myself, we are to have a consultation of physicians when she arrives in town, and my advice will then either have the sanction of the faculty, or better opinions will direct her otherwise.”—Sir Roger made a civil remark upon this, and Mr. L—— proceeded to say, that he flattered himself she had gained strength within the last few days, and that her spirits were greatly relieved from that dejected state in which he found them; he had prevailed upon my Lord to reinstate the gentleman she had been so long used to in his attendance upon her; he had fully communicated with Mr. Cawdle

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on her case, and discussed with him the whole process he was to follow, both as to medicine and regimen, till they met in London; and concluded by informing Sir Roger, to his utter surprise, that his niece would repose herself at his house the very next day, and make that the first stage of her journey.

Sir Roger started, struck his hands together with more than usual energy, and fixing his eyes upon his visitor, seemed to be surveying him with that sort of curiosity and surprise as a conjurer excites in his spectators, when he has almost persuaded them that he has the devil in his circle. How did he bring Lord Crowbery to consent to this, was the question from more than one quarter?—"I perceive," said this excellent person in reply, "I need not disguise from this company, that I had some prejudices to overcome; but few dispositions are so naturally obstinate as to hold out against truth and reason: Lady Crowbery's very serious indisposition made it my duty to scrutinize into causes, and I saw so much of mental distress combin'd with bodily, that I perceiv'd she would be irretrievably lost, unless some instant relaxation was provided for her; in this part of my investigation I had
great

great assistance from Mr. Cawdle; I found him possess'd of every thing that cou'd throw light upon the case, much attach'd to the person of the Lady, and sufficiently intelligent in his line for all the purposes I had in meditation for her relief. I found it necessary to be very explicit in my statement with my Lord; I told him that I had discovered, in my patient's case, wounds deep and out of sight, which were beyond my art to cure without his assistance, I must therefore condition for full confidence and concurrence, or immediate dismissal: this brought matters to an issue, and I must do his Lordship the justice to say, he was not long in deciding upon the alternative.—These," said he, addressing himself to the worthy Baronet, "are all the means that I have us'd for inducing Lord Crowbery to consent to his Lady making your house her first place of rest, and to permit her to be attended through the whole journey by Mr. Cawdle, who, with great zeal and alacrity, very much to his honour, embrac'd the undertaking at the very first word."—"God bless him for it!" cried Sir Roger, "I'll engage he will be no loser by it. Permit me to say, Sir, you have effected wonders."

Several

Several enquiries were now made as to Lady Crowbery's mode of travelling, what servants were to attend upon her, and whether my Lord would accompany her to Manstock or elsewhere. Full information was obtained upon all these points, and Lord Crowbery did not propose to go any part of the way with her; he was waiting the event of Mr. Blachford's death, which was almost hourly to be looked for.—“What had he to do with that?” was the question from Mr. Claypole; “Did his Lordship expect to be benefited by that gentleman's decease?”—“If he does,” replied Mr. L——, “I have reason to believe his expectations will be defeated altogether: I met the heir of Mr. Blachford this morning, within a mile of his house.”—All ears were instantly, as it were, erect for the news; he proceeded,—“As Mr. Blachford does not wish to keep the disposition of his property a secret, I have no scruple to say, that I was myself a witness to his will, and commission'd by him to seek for the young gentleman in this house, who is to inherit under it; but, as I said before, I luckily fell in with him, in company with a sea-officer, who, I understand, is your nephew, Sir, and in a situation by which I not only
fortunately

fortunately came to the knowledge of him, but had an opportunity of being in some further degree of use to him."

Here the agitation of more persons than one became so conspicuous, that Mr. L—— found it necessary to be very quick in assuring his audience, that no manner of mischief had ensued. A fracas, indeed, had taken place between the heir afore said and Captain Crowbery, who, in consequence, had turned out by the road side, with the pistols which the sea-officer had in his chaise, to settle their difference; one had been fired without effect by the young gentleman, whom he only knew by the name of Henry, and Captain Crowbery had discharged the other in the air, upon which the quarrel was made up, and the parties, before he left them, perfectly reconciled to each other.

"Heaven be prais'd!"—cried Isabella, her face as pale as ashes. "How horrible it is," said Mr. Claypole, "that such a practice as duelling shou'd exist in a Christian country!"—"Horrible do you call it?" said Fanny, "I honour Henry for his spirit; I adore him for it; wou'd you have a gentleman put up with such an insult as he receiv'd from that
nasty

nasty Captain? for my part I am only sorry he let him off so easily."

If a tea cup had not, at this instant, dropt from the fair hand of Isabella, by some chance or other, and drawn the attention of the company to the accident, it is to be presumed the Reverend Mr. Claypole wou'd not have suffered doctrine so adverse to his own to have been advanced by his niece without an answer; but as every body seemed interested about Isabella, he let the matter pass off, and contented himself with conveying his dissent, by the vehicle of a reproving look.

The conversation was now resumed, and many enquiries made as to Blachford's extraordinary bequest: was he sufficiently in his senses to dictate a will? and had they taken such precautions as would prevent a future litigation?—To this it was answered by Mr. L——, that himself, Zachary Cawdle, and Alexander Kinloch, were witnesses not to the will only, but to the capacity and sound senses of the will-maker.—“ Was it not, however,” Mr. Claypole demanded, “ the most singular and unexpected event that ever came to pass? and what cou'd have mov'd Blachford's heart so on a sudden to bestow his whole

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fortune upon one, whose life he had attempted to take away?"—To this question Mr. L—— calmly replied, that he presumed there could be little difficulty in accounting for what had been done by Mr. Blachford in the young person's favour, if it was admitted that the heart of a dying man was capable of being touched by repentance, and a desire of atoning for the crimes he had committed; and that it was so, he believed the will itself would clearly evince, as it spoke very plainly to the motives of the testator. "There was," added he, "a good creature, by name Ezekiel Daw, very much about him (too much perhaps for his body's health) who certainly cooperated with the terrors of death in bringing this about which appears to you so extraordinary an act: the man, it must be own'd, is something of an enthusiast, and for some time I kept him from my patient; but when it became a lost case, and the penitent on his death-bed eagerly demanded his return, I no longer opposed it; he was, undoubtedly, the great instrument of moving him to repentance, and to him I consider this young gentleman much indebted for the very ample atonement he will receive at Mr. Blachford's decease:

decease: I understand there is something mysterious in his history, but, from the reception he has met in this family, I can't doubt but he well deserves the good fortune that has befallen him."

Here Sir Roger Manstock broke silence, and in terms strong, though concise, gave his hearty testimony to the merits and good qualities of our hero. When the worthy Baronet had ceased speaking, Mr. L—— expressed himself well pleased that his prepossessions in this instance had not misled him.—“ For I profess to you,” said he, addressing himself to Sir Roger, “ I did never in my life feel a stronger impression from the person and countenance of any man than in the instance of this youth, and his conduct in the affair with Captain Crowbery was exactly such as was best calculated to confirm it.”

Sir Roger, with a smile of approbation, gave sign of his assent; Fanny Claypole said, she believed there could be but one opinion in the case; and the Reverend Mr. Claypole, straying a little from the subject in hand, observed, that Henry would now find himself a very rich and happy man, glancing a look at

the same time towards his niece.—“That is as it may be,” said Sir Roger, “as to his riches; Mr. Blachford, perhaps, has poor relations left behind him, and my friend Henry has a worthy spirit of his own.”—Claypole’s countenance fell, but Mr. L—— relieved him from his embarrassment, by saying, he could speak upon that subject from the authority of Blachford himself, who had told him that he had not a single relation in existence, who could have a claim upon him; confessing that he was the son of a certain planter in Jamaica, long since dead, by a Mulatto wench, who was his property, and that he was entirely the founder of his own fortune, which, if certain circumstances had not occurred, was once, as he was given to understand, bequeathed to the Lord Viscount Crowbery.—“Mark that,” said Mr. Claypole; “the cunning man is caught in his own trap: how just are the ways of Providence!”

But now time pressed with Mr. L—— for his departure; the carriage was called to the door, and the friend of human misery hastened away to soothe the pains of other sufferers, anxiously expecting their relief from his hands; it was

was a parting much regretted by Sir Roger—
“ Well,” cried he, “ if I live to go to London, sick or well I will cultivate the acquaintance of that amiable gentleman.”

CHAPTER IX.

Bold Measures boldly avowed.

THE Reverend Mr. Claypole having duly pondered these extraordinary occurrences in his mind, found himself not the less attracted towards Henry on the score of his good fortune ; for in that gentleman's estimate of his character, prosperity was regarded as no contemptible recommendation ; and he very justly considered, that Mr. Blachford's great property would not make him one whit the worse husband to his niece, or his niece the less affectionate wife to him. Still the circumstance of his hasty departure with Captain Cary, and the wild idea of volunteering with him, as stated in his letter to Sir Roger Manstock, seemed to augur so ill for Fanny, that he much doubted if that good understanding

between them, of which she had so confidently boasted, subsisted any where but in her sanguine imagination; neither could he with all his sagacity discover more than one reason for a young man's running away from the woman that made love to him, and that reason was not very compatible with Fanny's report afore said: as soon therefore as he could find a fair opportunity of drawing her into private conference, he began to open upon the subject of her attachment; he stated to her what, upon common report, the property of Mr. Blachford was supposed to amount to, which, upon the most moderate calculation, he guessed could not be less than twice as much as her own.—“ I care little about that,” cried Fanny, “ the man is my object.”—This was very candidly admitted as the first but not the only point to be considered in a connection for life: they could certainly, with proper discretion, live very comfortably upon their joint means, not losing sight in the mean time of future contingencies from Lady Crowbery, whose life, he observed with great regret, could not but be very precarious, as change of climate was generally the last desperate resource for constitutions, like her's, in deep decay.

Here

Here Fanny again put him by, declaring, that she looked to no prospects but the prospect of possessing the dear man of her heart. Mr. Claypole's candour again admitted, that all this was quite natural, and bespoke a very sincere affection; but he could not exactly see the necessity why it should be altogether so disinterested.—“Because,” replied that generous young lady, “if he was the veriest beggar upon earth I would marry him; nay, I must marry him.”—“Must,” repeated Claypole inquisitively; “is there a necessity in the case?”—“To be sure there is,” cried Fanny, nothing abashed, “after what has pass'd between us; after all his faithful promises, all the rapturous caresses he lavish'd upon me, when my fears and swoonings in the storm last night threw me in his power, and expos'd me to the prying eyes of Miss Manstock, whilst I was lock'd in his embraces. What wou'd she say of me? what wou'd the world, what wou'd you yourself pronounce upon my reputation, were I not to be his wife?”

“You alarm me,” cried Mr. Claypole, “has the villain dar'd——” “Villain do you call him!” exclaimed the angry fair one,—“he is no villain; but the most honourable, the most
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lovely and adorable of mankind. Do you think him capable of exposing me to the malice of this family, where I will not stay another night, though I travel hence on foot to seek a lodging?"—"Indeed, child, you terrify me," repeated he; "by this vehemence of expression I should almost fear that you have been betray'd into dangerous and improper concessions, through excess of love operating on the natural weakness of your sex, and conspiring with the temptations of opportunity. Let me know the worst at once, that I may obtain that instant reparation, which your character and my honour demand of the seducer. Your unsuspecting nature is not aware of the danger you are in; you trust to promises often lavish'd in the heat of passion, and as often violated in the coolness of reflection. You are yet to learn, that this young gentleman has written to Sir Roger Manstock a farewell letter, in which he tells him he is going out to sea with Captain Cary. Is that a proof of love? Is that consistent with his promises? Can a secession like this be reconcil'd to honour? And where is your hope of a speedy union with a man who is flying from you and his country?"

"Ridiculous alarm!" exclaimed the indignant

nant damsel ; “ who tells you all this idle tale ? Henry is only doing what I myself shall do ; flying from this odious house, where Isabella’s jealous eyes wou’d look him out of countenance, as they would fain do by me ; but I defy such feeble spite, for I have Henry fast as vows can bind him : he fly from me and his country ! No, were he not too honourable he is too wise for that, too fond, too much a friend to himself. As for what he writes to Sir Roger Manstock, ’tis a mere blind, a concerted matter between us ; he said last night he wou’d not pass another day in Manstock house ; he has fulfill’d his word, and this contrivance extricates him from an uneasy situation, and gives no offence. I understand it all, and if you’ll only help to place me somewhere within his reach and out of their’s, from whose intrusion he escapes, my life upon it I will lure him back.”

A confidence so strongly vouched seemed to have due effect upon the good man, whose tender feelings for his niece had given him such alarm ; his countenance cleared up, and having ruminated a while upon the case, he took a more placid tone, and said—“ Well, niece, I have turn’d it over in my thoughts, and do agree with you, that ’twill be better for

you to remove from hence, especially as the Lady Crowbery is expected, with whom you have little or not acquaintance, and therefore the best plea in the world for civilly stepping out of the way from a family meeting of so interesting and melancholy a sort. I, who have not the same excuse, will remain where I am, and you shall have my parsonage house to yourself in the meanwhile ; there are servants in it, and all things ready to receive you. You know, my dear, how greatly it concerns me to avoid any chance of a misunderstanding with my worthy friend Sir Roger, therefore you must be content to let me state matters to him in such a light as may make a merit of your going ; and this corresponds not only with my regard to him, but also with my views as to myself, for I am not out of hope, through his interest with the Lady Patroness, to obtain the nomination to Ratcliffe's valuable living, which is yet undispos'd of."

" I know nothing about that," replied Fanny, with a careless air ; " but if I can have the parsonage to myself, with no jealous Miss to overlook me, I desire nothing more ; I will be answerable for all the rest."—" It shall be so then," said this compliant uncle ; " the
house

house shall be your own ; and may success attend your laudable and virtuous endeavours : for in truth, my dear, if I was not fully persuaded, that this worthy young man would make you an excellent husband, especially since this unexpected good fortune has fallen upon him, I would be the last man living to do what I do for the promotion of the match. I am a great friend to young people, and make all the allowances in reason for those pardonable weaknesses that proceed from mutual fondness for each other. I have felt the force of love myself in former days, and remember what it was ; I am therefore doubly urg'd to be active in your cause, both from zeal to forward your wishes and real approbation of the object they point at. With this view it strikes me as a proper measure to step over to Crowbery to-morrow, where I can hardly fail of meeting our young friend the heir, and at the same time that I can impart any message or letter you may wish to send, I can avail myself of the opportunity for paying my respects to Lady Crowbery, and attending her upon her way to Manstock House, if that is found acceptable."

" I approve of the proposal much," replied

plied the Lady, " and will write to Henry : if he remains an hour at Crowbery, after he has receiv'd my letter, he is not the man I take him for."

These measures being so agreed, Mr. Claypole's next business was to seek his friend Sir Roger, whom he very opportunely met, taking a solitary walk in the grove. Claypole's thoughts were ready arranged, and it was without difficulty he found words for them, and proper address to make his proposal of removing Fanny acceptable to his friend Sir Roger; nay, he was so explicit in stating particulars, and so little sparing of his niece's reputation, in the account he gave of her nightly interview with our hero in the gallery, that the worthy Baronet drew exactly those conclusions which Claypole wished to lead him to, saw and acknowledged the propriety of removing Fanny out of the house, and expressed himself much indebted to his candid friend for the delicacy of the measure. At the same time he was not wanting in all due sensibility on behalf of that friend, and just resentment against Henry for his share in the transaction. If he did not inveigh against him quite so bitterly on this occasion, as his conduct might seem to merit, it

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was because he did not see it in the light of an absolute seduction, having been a witness to Fanny's flippant behaviour towards our hero, and being conscious moreover, that he had something to accuse himself of for the conversation he had held with Henry in the chaise, which possibly might have inspired him with the first idea of assailing a virtue, that, according to his own report of it, had no right to be greatly respected, much less to be considered as absolutely impregnable.

These reflections, which in some degree caus'd his anger to abate, did not however prevent him from considering Henry's conduct in its true light, and resenting it as a breach of that decorum, which he had a right to expect from a young man admitted into his family under such circumstances. He still found himself called upon, by all the laws of friendship and hospitality, to co-operate in every measure that Claypole could propose for obtaining reparation for the indignity, and when he understood that marriage was the point in view, he declared himself determined to enforce justice, if it became necessary, by resorting to his niece Lady Crowbery, and employing her authority over Henry, in aid of his own, for that purpose.

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This Mr. Claypole begged might be suspended for a while, and at the same time took occasion to open his scheme of going over to Crowbery the next morning, in search of the young man.—“And so you shall,” cried the good man, “and my chaise shall be at your service, with every thing else that you can say on my part, to convince him of the sense I entertain of his conduct, and to further your appeal for justice to your niece. If he has still the hardiness to withstand you, and shall attempt to run out to sea with my nephew Cary, I warrant I have that influence with Jack as will not suffer him to escape us by that channel at least.”—“I don’t pretend to justify my niece in all particulars,” said Claypole; “but a lady’s honour is not to be sported with, and he has certainly made her a firm promise of marriage; but then, I must observe, it was a promise made upon the spur of passion, and (which is more alarming) made when her fortune was a greater object to him than it has now eventually become.”—“In that particular,” cried Sir Roger, “I do not agree with you. Henry, amongst all his failings, is not a mercenary lover; and I must believe that Miss Claypole’s fortune is neither more nor less in his thoughts, for any thing that has happen’d

happen'd to him ; and if I am not greatly mistaken in his character, he is an honourable lad, and will not go back from any promise he has given. If Miss Claypole makes a true report, and he has pass'd his word to her, I think the marriage is secure ; if it is not a case of honour, but of choice, I hold it to be doubtful."

Here the dialogue ended, and the friends separated, Sir Roger to prolong his walk, Claypole to resume his meditations.

CHAPTER X.

More bad Tidings of our degraded Hero.

IT is time now to attend upon my hero, who, though degraded in character, is in train to be so advanced in fortune's favour, that he has one claim at least upon my attention, which does not pass for nothing with the world at large.

The chaise, in which he was conveyed with his friend Cary from those once happy scenes, now forfeited and forsaken, made such rapid progress, that he soon found himself within sight of Crowbery Castle, proudly towering over its dependant

dependant village, which spread itself along the vale. Here, in a narrow lane, our travellers were encountered by a gentleman on horseback, who had a fowling-piece in his hand, and was followed by a brace of pointers. The pass was so strait that civility required the gentlemen in the carriage to stop their drivers. Whilst Cary was giving these orders, he discovered the person of Captain Crowbery, and instantly addressed him by his name. Henry had recognized him at the same instant, and determined to let him know he was informed of his designs, eagerly cried out,—“When you are at leisure, Captain Crowbery, I shall be glad to have a word with you.”

The chaise had stopt opposite to a gate, which led to a field, and made a recess in the lane, where Crowbery had taken post for the convenience of passing. He knew the person of our hero, and this abrupt salutation was answered by a demand upon Henry to explain himself; this explanation was immediately given in terms that required no further illustration, and with a degree of heat that Cary vainly attempted to moderate. Want of spirit was not amongst Crowbery's defects; and in the hearing of the Captain, to whom all the particulars

were

were so fully known, it wou'd have been in vain for him, had he been so disposed, to have disavowed the plot he had projected against the person of our hero. This he did not attempt, but on the contrary retorted upon Henry with expressions not less hostile than those he had made use of.—“ Dismount,” cried Henry; “ I have pistols in the chaise :” immediately the door was flung open, and he was upon his feet with the weapons in his hand. Crowbery made no delay ; the word was given to follow, and they rushed into the adjoining field together. Cary raised his voice to no purpose, exclaiming,—“ Gentlemen, you are too hasty ; this matter may be explain'd ; suffer me to interpose.” By this time they had taken their distance, and each with a pistol in his hand had levelled at his opponent, Crowbery calling out to fire : Henry gave fire at the instant, and the ball passed through Crowbery's coat, which was unbuttoned.—“ You have mis'd me,” he cried, and immediately discharged his pistol in the air.—“ Now I am ready,” added he, “ to express my regret for what I have done, if that will satisfy you ; if not, we will repeat the operation till the offence is cancelled : I wou'd have made atonement at first ; but the honour
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of a soldier will not permit him to apologize to any one, who with a weapon in his hand calls him out for satisfaction, and precludes an explanation."

" 'Tis enough," cried Cary, " your behaviour, Captain Crowbery, does honour to yourself and your corps: I am sure my friend is perfectly satisfied."—" With every thing but myself," replied Henry; " but that I have aim'd at Captain Crowbery's life without exposing my own to the same danger is a painful reflection, that I shall not easily get rid of."— At this moment Mr. L—— came up, and his chaise being entangled in the same defile, he got out upon the report of the pistol, and ran with all speed to the place of action. As soon as he had seen a reconciliation between the parties perfectly effected, he drew Henry aside, and communicated to him the intelligence he had in charge from Blachford, of which the reader is already informed.

Henry stood wrapt in deep attention, pondering upon an event so strange and unlooked for, till Mr. L——, having clearly detailed the whole account, with all particulars leading to it, ceased from speaking. Henry now perceived it was expected of him to reply, and
began

began by returning thanks to Mr. L—— for the communication he had given him, which he observed, was of a sort so extraordinary, that if he had received it from authority less respectable, he should scarce have given credit to it, considering it only as the vapour of a delirium, to which no rationality could be affixed, and of course he should have treated the deed as nugatory and illegal—"But to you, Sir," added he, "and to the other gentlemen, who attest his capacity, I must give perfect credit. Certain it is that Mr. Blachford, in his dealings with me, has something to repent of; but it is as certain I needed not to be stimulated to forgiveness by any other bribe than the satisfaction of giving ease to the compunctious feelings of a dying man, as you describe him to be: I shall instantly attend upon him according to his desire, and to the conclusions I may draw from that interview, I must refer my final resolution."

This said, they parted, Mr. L—— proceeding on his way towards Manstock House, Henry to the cottage of his friend Ezekiel, where Captain Cary set him down and pursued his journey.

It was still early morning; Ezekiel however was up and alone, and had just saluted the
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the nostrils of Aurora with his morning pipe; the smoke that curled round his head did not prevent him from recognizing the face of his friend; he drew the tube from his mouth, and greeted him with his usual welcome: he began immediately upon the business of Blachford, in which Henry gave him no interruption, though the detail was sufficiently verbose and circumstantial, in the course of which he did not forget to interweave many pious calls and admonitions to a worthy use of the great and unexpected good fortune that had befallen him.

When Henry had heard him to an end, he made a very proper acknowledgement of the obligations he was under to him for his zealous and kind services. In this part of his discourse, he expressed himself with warmth and animation; but when he came to speak of his own immediate interest in Blachford's intended bequest, the reflections he had brought with him from Manstock House weighed so heavy on his spirits, that his language sunk below indifference. This was matter of surprize to honest Daw, who knew not that his friend had to lament a loss, by the forfeiture of Isabella's esteem, which no worldly wealth or prosperity could

could compensate; he was therefore instant with him not to put on an assumed contempt for the good things of this life, which were only then to be despised when they were unworthily employed; moderation, he observed, was much to be commended, but insensibility was a degradation of our nature. To a remark so little applicable to his case, Henry made no reply, but grasping the hand of the good man, who was sitting beside him, and watching his countenance at this moment, he exclaimed—"By my soul, Ezekiel, thou hast the kindest, best, and worthiest heart in nature, and when hard fate shall separate us, as soon it will, by Heavens! the parting from you will make a woman of me, so much do I love and honour you."

Ezekiel stared wildly at him for a moment, then drew the pipe full smoking from his mouth, whiffed away what he had drawn from it with an indignant air, and dashed it on the hearth to atoms.—"Parting!" he exclaimed; "by the life of Pharaoh, I will never part from thee!"—Then rising suddenly from his seat, and stretching himself up upon his insteps, he assumed a posture so militarily perpendicular, and at the same time pursed his brow

brow into a frown that marked such determined resolution, that our hero, gazing with astonishment upon a figure at once so enthusiastic and so grotesque, waited in suspense till the oracle should utter his definitive response.—“Set forward,” at length cried Ezekiel. “set forward, I say, young man, when thou wilt, with the blessing of the Lord, I am ready to accompany thee.”

Ezekiel's mind was not made to embrace more than one object at a time, if that was an interesting one; in friendship more especially his ideas were too ardent to be at leisure for any other subject collaterally, so that he had just now consigned Blachford and his legacy to absolute oblivion; neither did he keep his offer back till enquiry could be made of Henry, whither he was going, and why he was going at all, but having quitted his wicker chair, and disposed of his tobacco pipe by shivering it into fragments, he strode to the corner of the kitchen, where he seized hold of his faithful crabstick, and brandishing it with a gallant air, declared himself forthwith ready to begin his march.—“Hold,” cried Henry, smiling, “have patience, my good friend; our's is no short trip, and methinks
you

you are not equipt for a long one."—That's true, that's true," replied Ezekiel, " I protest to you my apparel had escap'd me."—And indeed, unless an old black and white stuff night gown, with a woollen cap on his head, and worn-out shoes cut into slippers on his feet, might be called the proper trim of a traveller, honest Ezekiel was at this moment no otherwise provided.

" But you forget," said Henry, " Mr. Blackford and his business."—" Ods my life," quoth Daw, " as sure as can be it had flipt my memory, and now it comes into my mind that I shou'd have asked you whither it is that you are going, and how it comes to pass that you are posting away just when fortune is dropping into your lap : these, do you see, friend Henry, are very natural questions, and my only wonder is, how it came about that they did not occur to me before."—" 'Tis all in good time, quoth Henry, " for if I can prevail, you shall not set a foot without these doors, on my account. With the officer, who accompanied me hither in the chaise, I am going out of England."—" Well, well," resumed the good man, " if thou art going in a good cause, were it to circumnavigate the globe, I'll not flinch

flinch from my word. Dost think, because I am a man of peace, I am therefore not a man of spirit? But whither art thou bound? Is it to fight the enemies of our country? Be it so! The danger thou can'st face I shall not fly from."—"I know I may depend upon your secrecy," said Henry, "therefore I shall not disguise from you my intentions: Lady Crowsberry is ordered to Lisbon."—"And dost thou think of going with her?" cried Ezekiel.—"Not so," replied Henry, "for I shall take my passage by another conveyance."

Here the preacher shook his head, which, being noticed by our hero—"Banish all these horrid notions," he cried; "banish them for ever! Let it not enter into your heart to conceive that my motives are not pious, and my duties sacred. You would have followed me to prison, being a stranger to you and a culprit; she is a guiltless sufferer, my friend and benefactress; shall I do less for her, and be a monster of ingratitude?"—"Thou shalt not," quoth honest Daw; "if gratitude be thy motive; I will travel with a grateful man to the world's utmost limit, nay beyond it, for I pronounce, that gratitude is a lovely virtue, it is, it is—but I have now no time to tell thee

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what it is ; I will speak more fully of it on another occasion. But hark thee, friend of mine, thou must also be regardful of thine interests in this Blachford: he is a dying man, and shou'd'st thou not be present when he breathes his last, the harpies may lay hold of his effects, and thou may'st be defrauded of some part at least of that property, which is lawfully to devolve to thee."—" Whatever may be the consequence," replied Henry, " I shall not put interest in the balance against conscience. I must perform my duty to Lady Crowbery ; and if you will remain here, and act on my behalf upon the spot, all will be well ; and, in fact, my friend, as you have been the moving cause of all this unlooked for good fortune, I have a claim upon your kind offices, for completing what you have begun."—" Very well," replied Daw, " we shall see what is to be done after you have visited the sick man ; in the mean time I will go and apparel myself for the day."

CHAPTER XI.

A Death-bed Dialogue, in which some Readers will think there is much Folly, others much Honour, on the Part of our Hero.

WHILST Ezekiel Daw was ascending to his cock-loft, and before Henry had fet out upon his vifit to Blachford, Doctor Zachary Cawdle, returning from his patient at the next door, entered the cottage. As foon as he efpyed our hero—"Welcome, welcome," he exclaimed, "thou child of good fortune; fure the fkyes rain gold for you; here's a chance, and a change! Marry, the times are ftrangely altered, Henry, fince you and I firft met. Why this juftice of our's is indeed a juftice at laft, and honeft Ezekiel the preacher has once in his life preach'd to fome purpofe; I have only made a hole in the head of my patient, he has open'd his heart. And fo you are now the 'Squire of Crowbery, heir to his whole fortune, a few legacies excepted, one of which I am fure you will not regret, a fmall bequeft to Susan May, to balance old accompts: but what gratifies me above all is, that he has entirely cut this good-for-nothing

Peer

Peer out of his will, who stood heir to his whole property before this blow upon his skull brought my patient to a better recollection. Death and Ezekiel together have wrought a wonderful reformation."

When Zachary had rambled on in this strain for some time, Henry, who had paid little or no attention to what he had been saying, demanded if it was now a proper time for him to pay his visit to Mr. Blachford? Zachary replied, that he had just then been dressing his wound, and wou'd recommend him to wait a few minutes before he presented himself for admission.—"Sit down then," cried Henry, "if you please, and satisfy my anxious curiosity on a subject infinitely more interesting to me, than all my expectations from Mr. Blachford, had he the wealth of the Indies to bestow." He then began a course of enquiries relative to his mother, which, with Zachary's circumstantial answers, and certain occasional digressions, into which his professional vanity betrayed him, held on the conversation till it was time for him to repair to Blachford. He had, however, in the course of this conversation, commissioned Zachary to report to his mother every thing that he wished her to be

informed of, respecting the time, he should pass in attendance upon Blachford, and the resolution he had taken of repairing to Lisbon, in the hope of paying his duty to her there: he was very particular in guarding against mistakes, and repeated his instructions so frequently, and with such precision, that Zachary, who did not just then call to mind all the reasons for his caution, began to feel offended at his manner, and asked him, if he could not trust his memory for conveying a simple message?—"I should have thought so," replied Henry, "if you had not, most unfortunately for me, let it fail you in the matter of the little packet, which you was to deliver to me from my mother."—He then proceeded to explain to him the importance of that paper, the opportunity he had lost by not possessing it in time, and the fatal consequences that had nearly ensued upon his altercation with the person it alluded to. Zachary heard all this with astonishment, and after bestowing upon himself a very plentiful proportion of blockheads and boobies, promised that he would spare no pains to atone for his mistake, by enquiring out Mr. Delapoer, when he should arrive in London with Lady Crowbery; and he

he despaired not but intelligence could there be obtained of him, if he was actually in England, as Lady Crowbery supposed, of which, however, he declared, for his part, he took leave to doubt. And now the time being come when the Doctor judged his patient might be accessible, he asked Henry if he had set his thoughts in order for an interview; and being answered that he was ready to accompany him, he rose from his seat, when Henry, recollecting himself on a sudden, stopt, and taking him by the button, said—"One word more if you please before we part: I think you said there was a legacy bequeathed to Susan May, and that it was to balance old accompts: I prythee, my good friend, tell me, if it is no inviolable secret, what those old accompts are which Blachford has to balance."—"Humph!" quoth the accoucheur, "it was an account of about nine months standing, and such a one as sometimes falls into my hands to audit; if you can guess at it you may, but we reveal no secrets of this sort, 'tis against the freemasonry of our order."—"Well then," said Henry, "I know it, but you did not tell me. Blachford, we will suppose, seduc'd Susan May, and had a child by her; is it not so?"—"I must confess," re-

plied the Doctor, "there is as fine a boy now alive, of somebody's producing, as ever I usher'd into the world, yourself not excepted, and, to the best of my belief, his Worship has the honour of being the father of it; 'tis but right, therefore, you see, that some provision should be made for its maintenance, and, if I am not mistaken, it is to the exact amount of forty pounds a year, charg'd upon the estate, which I dare say you will not think unreasonable."

Here Zachary made a pause; but Henry remaining silent, he proceeded—"You will hear this from Blachford himself, in which case I shall be acquitted of the secret; but, as we have kept it close hitherto, I am persuaded you will not let it get out, to the prejudice of the poor girl in her place, for I think she will hardly be so foolish as to throw that up voluntarily on account of this legacy."—Henry asked if this was all Blachford had done for the mother and child? Zachary assured him that to the best of his remembrance, there was no other incumbrance on their account; it was a case of conscience, he observed, and though he believed they had been upon no terms of intimacy for some time past, yet, for his own
part

part he should have given very little credit to Blachford's reformation, if he had gone out of the world, and taken no notice of a poor girl, whom he had reason to suspect was trepanned into the scrape by very unfair practices; and though perhaps she was somewhat of the wildest afterwards, as Henry himself probably could witness, yet whom had she to thank for it but her seducer?

"'Tis enough," cried Henry; "I am ready to attend you to Mr. Blachford's."

After waiting a few minutes in a lower room, whilst the Doctor went up stairs to announce his arrival, our hero was admitted to the sick man's chamber: he was was lying on his couch, supported by pillows, and upon Henry's entering, Zachary and the nurse retired. One small ray of light was let into the room, which served to guide the steps of our hero through the gloom, who had been desired to tread with great caution, and to speak low, as the least jar was intolerable to the aching brain of the wounded man. A chair was placed close to the couch, at the right hand of Blachford, who made a sign to his visitor to seat himself in it. This he accordingly did, treading lightly and with care as he moved towards it.

A silence for some time was observed by both parties, Blachford holding his handkerchief to his eyes the whilst. At last, speaking in a feeble tone, he said — “ I am afraid and ashamed to look upon you ; I fear it is not possible you can forgive me, and, if you could, how can I hope——” Here something seemed to choke his speech, and he broke off. Henry waited awhile in compassionate attention, but finding him relapsing into his former debility, with his handkerchief again held to his eyes, he thought it time to speak, and addressed him as follows :—“ Mr. Blachford, I do beseech you to believe, that what I am about to say to you is not dictated by any interested motives, but springs freely and voluntarily from my heart, influenced only by an unfeigned commiseration for the state in which I find you, and a firm reliance on the sincerity of your contrition. For whatever you have done or meditated against me, I do most entirely and from my soul forgive you.”

“ You are infinitely kind and compassionate,” said Blachford, faintly ; “ but I have been the cruellest of monsters towards you, not only in the dark business that has brought me to this condition, but in the matter of the trial, where

where I wou'd fain have suppressed the evidence that so clearly acquitted you : but this is not all ; it was I who set Lord Crowbery upon you ; I was the tale-bearer from that wretched woman Mrs. Cawdle, that made him furious against you and this unhappy lady, who, I dare say, was falsely slander'd and unjustly persecuted through my means ; I have all her sufferings on my conscience ; I am weigh'd down by offences. Alas ! what will become of me ? and what atonement can I now make to you in the first place ? what to that injur'd Lady, whose health, fame, happiness, have been sacrific'd to my malice ? for it was the very demons of malice, envy and jealousy, that possess'd me against you, and through you against her. All that I can do is all too little ; yet what I can I have done. I know I can expect no mercy from Heaven, if I do not strive to repair the wrongs I have done upon earth. Justice demands that I should do my best to make that life happy which I have attempted to destroy : Heaven grant that my endeavours may succeed ! Poverty at least you need no longer dread ; by this deed you are heir to all I am possess'd of, and, be assur'd, most excellent young man, that if conscience did

did not force me to the act, choice and opinion in your favour wou'd now lead me to it freely and voluntarily, for I am confident you deserve it, and long, long may you enjoy it!"

"If I am to receive this," said Henry, (taking the will that Blachford tendered to him) "as an act of justice and atonement, which your conscience impels you to discharge, I certainly shall not oppose myself to your will and pleasure; but before I acquiesce in a deed that accumulates all your atonement upon me alone, I shou'd know, and be convinc'd, there are no other injur'd persons who have better claims upon it; nay, give me leave to say, who have any claims. You well observ'd just now that you cou'd expect no mercy from Heaven, if you did not strive to repair the wrongs you have done upon earth; it was a becoming sentiment, and I believe I repeat it nearly, if not correctly, in your own words; suffer me, therefore, I conjure you, by your hope in Heaven, to put it closely to your conscience, whether you have repair'd all wrongs committed against others as fully and sufficiently as you have those committed against me?"

The sick man paused, as one employed in recollection; at last he said, he thought he could

could reply with a safe conscience, that he had made proportionable restitution to all claimants on the score of injuries—"One of that description," said he, "you will find remember'd in my will; an acquaintance of your own, Susan May by name; I have burthen'd you with a provision of forty pounds a year for her life."

"And why have you so done?" said Henry. "Because—because," replied Blachford, "I have extorted favours from her she did not voluntarily grant, and thereby encumber'd her with difficulties and expences which this annuity will amply satisfy. Ah! my dear Sir!" added he, "this was the severest tug of all I had to struggle with; for that girl has been the cruel cause of all my misery. I was infatuated with her charms, I doated upon her to distraction; but as soon as she set her eyes on you, she turn'd them from me with loathing and abhorrence. This was horror to my heart: this it was that made me furious to revenge myself on you: 'twas jealousy, outrageous jealousy, that inspir'd me to attempt your life: judge, therefore, what I had to combat, before I cou'd persuade myself to make atonement to one, whom in reason I regarded as rather bound to atone to me, for all the pains and sorrows that
have

have embitter'd my sad cup, and brought me to this lamentable state of body and of mind."

"You have an infant son by her," said Henry.—"You know it then, it seems," replied the sick man; "I have a son by her; at least I think he is my son; and in that persuasion nature had its share of influence for softening my resentment, and inducing me to make provision for a helpless innocent."

"What must that nature be," cried Henry, "which does not feel this influence? But you have us'd the word *resentment*; I pray you Sir, inform me rightly of your cause of resentment against this young woman; Did she seduce you, or you her?"

"You know her well, I dare say, Sir," said Blachford; "you must have had possession of her frequently."

"Never, I take Heaven to witness; never, by all that's sacred," exclaimed Henry, elevating his voice rather above the pitch proper for his situation.

"You astonish me," said the other; may I indeed believe you?"

"As confidently as you believe in Heaven. She is innocent for me; I shou'd be happy for your conscience sake cou'd you say as much with

with the same truth ; for yet you have not answer'd to the question of seduction, on which, as I conceive, the whole of your responsibility must turn, and by that you ought to measure and proportion your atonement."

" Then I will answer you," returned Blachford, sighing, " and discharge my troubled conscience by confession of the whole proceeding. Seduction base as hell was practis'd by my agent to submit her to my desires ; my housekeeper, a woman corrupted to my purposes, invited this girl, then sixteen years of age, and lovely as an angel, to her room in my house ; there she caressed her, treated her with dainties, such as she, poor thing, had never tasted, gave her rich cordials, persuading her of their harmless quality, and so, in fine, intoxicated her by surprise : that moment was her ruin : devil as I was, in that state of insensibility I accomplish'd my vile purpose. The intoxication pass'd off, and the recovery of her senses disclos'd the injury she had suffer'd ; her agonies were strong, and her reproaches vehement ; but soothings, presents, promises, were lavishly bestow'd, and in conclusion took effect : she was poor, and vain of her fair person ; I was not wanting to profit of that vanity,

nity, and I gave her means to deck herself out in a style that put down all her rivals in the village. The good dame, her mother, it is true, was alarm'd ; but I took means to lull her suspicions, and she liv'd rent-free in her cottage : I don't say she accommodated me in my intrigue, but she was credulous in the extreme, and my professions, jointly with my favours, blinded her effectually. Susan recover'd her spirits, and I, by a collusion with that sorry jade, whom honest Cawdle is condemn'd to call wife, put Susan into her service, removing her from under the eye of her mother and that worthy soul Ezekiel Daw, who liv'd with her. Here I had free access ; but dearly paid by occasional civilities to that disgustful set her mistress. At nine months end from my first knowledge of her she bore this boy ; Zachary brought him into the world, and the affair was secretly so manag'd as to create no suspicion, even in her mother. It is a lovely boy, and I put him out to nurse, providing for his maintenance, and frequently visiting him. Here then you have my full confession : let Susan therefore enjoy her annuity, which I can well believe you think she fully deserves ; and suffer me to hope you will protect and be a father to my helpless child."

" Hear

"Hear me!" cried Henry, "and let me implore you to have regard for your departing soul: I am myself, like your poor innocent, a son of nature, born out of marriage, thrown upon the world without inheritance, and unacknowledg'd by the laws of man; yet I have found a friend that leaves me nothing to regret, when I decline your bounty, which here I solemnly declare, calling my God to witness, I peremptorily renounce in favour of your son. Bequeath not your own child to a stranger; make not me your intermediate instrument of justice, but plead your own atonement at the throne of mercy, and delay not for a moment to mitigate the wrath of that just judge, who will not spare the parent that abandons his own offspring."

"Oh horrible!" cried Blachford, "you tear my heart asunder."

"Not so," Henry answered, lowering his voice; "I'll heal it, soften it, comfort it. You shall live happily, or die in peace; and never will I quit this place till you consent to what I ask. 'Tis for your sake I intercede; it is to awaken nature in your heart, and reconcile you to your God, that I thus earnestly conjure you to strike out my name from this mistaken paper and adopt your son."

"Mysterious,

"Mysterious, wonderful young man!" cried Blachford; "I do not know your name; the blanks are left for you to fill."

"Then fill them with the name that naturally shou'd fill them. Send for your infant and his mother; I'll be your messenger. Enjoy the gratifying sight of those whom you make happy, and let me be not your heir, but the executor of your will, and the guardian of your son; then I will call you just; then and only then I will honour your memory, and record you as my friend and benefactor."

"Do with me as you will," cried Blachford; "your generosity overcomes me; I sicken and am faint; language fails me: I commit myself to your disposal."

Our hero said no more; his suit was granted; joy swelled his benevolent heart; he rose from his seat, cast a look of pity on the dying man and departed.



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